ESSAYS
ON
ISLAM
By

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By

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TO MY WIFE

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PREFACE

These essays have been written from time to time over a period of ten years, and cover a wide range of Islamic subjects. Some of the discussions may appear to be provocative; however, they do certainly invite our scholars to a new line of thought. Each one of these essays has been published in well known journals, and reviewed by well known scholars. These essays are not self-contained; in fact, each essay can be expanded into a book form. The reader should, therefore, seek only such information as is possible to compress within the span of a few pages. The author, at the same time, does not claim any finality in the subject-matter he has discussed; nor is it possible to do so. The views expressed in these pages are entirely his own, which he has formed during the period of his study. Here and there a few contradictions may even be noticeable; the author has preferred them to stand, as it indicates the growth of his very human thought.

It may be asked, as to why the author has undertaken to publish them when they have already been published and opined in the press. The reasons are three-fold. Firstly, to preserve them, as they were favourably received when first published; secondly, to make available for the general public such material as is not easily accessible to them through the Journals in which they were first published. And thirdly, the author has recently observed, that books on similar subjects have come into the market, which lack an independent enquiry, and are not thought-provoking. It is the

author's earnest desire that the Muslims should now onwards study the Holy Quran independently if they desire to understand it in its prestine purity. The present-day commenteries have become out of date. The Holy Quran proclaims to fit into the need of every society. We must therefore produce the Man who can fit into the modern Pattern of society with Islamic qualities to suit our requirements of the day; and he must be equipped with religious knowledge as well as be conversant with the recent advances made in Science and Philosophy. The Muslim thinkers must shake off the age-old intellectual lithargy, and get out of their hiding places in which they have been hibernating, and rise to the occasion to carve out new avenues for their intellectual expansion.

When I talk of the modern Pattern of society, I am not recommending the evils of modern civilization. I merely mean the modern civilization less its evils. After all the modern civilization is not totally evil—just as any other civilization; and no civilization has ever been puritanical! It has good points as well, the utility of which has to be accepted. To clothe in western attire and speak a foreign language is no crime. Dress and language have at no time been the property of any single nation. They belong to civilization. The Christian scholars adopted our dress and our language in Spain when they came to study our sciences. Today we cannot work in the factories nor fly aeroplanes in Loin cloths and *Dhoties*. We must wear the attire appropriate to them. We must learn the arts and sciences of the western world. By this I do not recommend that we should

adopt a materialistic out look on life and discard its spritual values. No; but I do wish to suggest a systematised imposition of restriction on the unbridled urge of the educated that inclines them to mis-calculated spiritual leanings, which is resulting in their increasing dependence on faked religious guides. This growing trend is killing the aptitude for independent enquiry. Most of these guides are not conversant with this highly specialised science. The seekers after truth are thus misguided through the religious ignorance of these people. Instead of uplifting them spiritually, the very spirits of these innocent persons are mercilessly annihilated. All traces of independent search and enquiry are totally exterminated.

The seeds of cosmic consciousness and spiritual expansion are sown in the very Pattern of man. The Holy Quran does not permit any spiritual dependence. Man has to seek this within himself, and not outside of him. Relying on the spiritual strength of another is to mutilate the urges within. The Holy Quran gives complete directions on spiritual guidance for the needs of man;. One must, locate, cultivate, nourish, and exploit the spiritual potentialities within. Indiscriminate hankering after such guides is paralysing the nation and making it static in its intellectual outlook. It is creating too many false personalities and is destroying the essence in man. Man's duty is to think and ponder according to the Holy Quran; and if you leave this to others, you will become an automaton; worse than a machine.

The Muslims must have implicit faith in their Creator,

satisfaction of human needs.

and derive inspiration from the Holy Quran, and wherever necessary from the Ahdith. But in no case should they blindly become a slave to the later; especially when they do not conform to the text of the Holy Quran. There is a tendency to pay more attention to the Ahdith than to the Holy Quran; and this is because of the increasing stress being laid on them by the spiritual leaders, for the simple reason, that they do not understand the Holy Book in its right perspective, and they lay all the emphasis on the traditions which suits their own way of life. The educated Muslim is being driven away and away from the actual truth. This is proving fatal. By all means resort to the Ahdith whenever an injuction needs clarification, but do not discard the Quranic text in favour of the Ahdith.

There is also a tendency to pay more attention to the *Nawafal* than the Fraidh. It is the Fraidh which are encumbant on the Faithful. In this busy world today, when human activity has increased a hundred fold, the religion must be presented to the average man in as simple a manner as possible. Let him not feel compelled to practise something prolonged for which he has no time. The Holy Prophet (OWBP) has many a time said that long prayers should be avoided as people have to attend to business. Prolonged ceremonies are repulsive to the busy man; but short and sweet prayers are very attractive. The present human generation has become very inquisitive. For their general practice only the minimum required should be imparted, and there should be no compulsion whatsoever. Compulsion creates reaction and repulsion. This must be avoided;

and it can only be avoided by making things as simple as possible. After all the prayers and other injunctions are orders which relate to a direct relationship between God and Man, and have their own specific uses. Man is answerable to God for their compliance and non-compliance. God Almighty does not lay down any punishment for the negligence of such injunctions. But, in so far as, the Holy Quran talks of human rights and relationship, it issues the strick-test of penalties for their non-observance. Why is this? Has anyone ever stopped to ponder? Do you know that this world was created for the man; but the man was not created for this world: he was created for the world Hereafter. This world is a stage which has been set for him to enact the drama of life, on the performance of which he will receive his recompence. The details of this play are given out in the Quranic narration, which directs man not to create disruption and disorder on the surface of this earth. Man is not created to upset the settings of this stage, but to improve and beautify them. "God and man live by perpetual creation." (Iqbal)

> "Do not create disorder upon this Earth after order has been restored." (Quran).

God Almighty has imposed strict rules in order to maintain order and avoid disruption. These are all with regard to human relationship. Severe penalties have been imposed for the infringement of these orders. But, as I have said; for the relationship he has established between Himself and man, He imposes no penalty for their infringement. He reserves the judgement to Himself. Hence for

us to impose penalties for injunctions which he has reserved for Himself is to impose and enforce restrictions which are not desireable in the religious sense. This drives people away from the right path.

Man's contact with Almighty God is direct, without the intervention of another. The Holy Prophet (OWBP) appeared as the last guide and prompter on this stage. He appeared because the mind of man had reached the peak of its evolution. It was prepared now to receive the last and the most comprehensive command which was self-contained. Having done his job, God Almighty put a seal to all future revelation. Religion was completed. Man having seen this rehearsal was now to stage his own plays. Any guidance which was now to be sought, is to be had from the Holy Quran, which has broken all barriers between man and God. We require no one to intercede. We shall be guided directly; we shall be judged directly. This has been made possible by giving man a certain amount of control over his actions. This control was graciously given to help him in the onerous responsibility which he had taken upon himself as the *Kalifah*; and, it is this control which drives him into the domain of reward and punishment. This responsibility must be carried to its logical end, however unpleasant it may seem. Had man not accepted this responsibility and given the control, he would not have been held responsible for his actions. It is interesting to note that the attitude towards life adopted by the Holy Quran is neither that of the Existentialists nor that of the *Jabriah* (Determinists). It chalks out a middle path, as is its wont

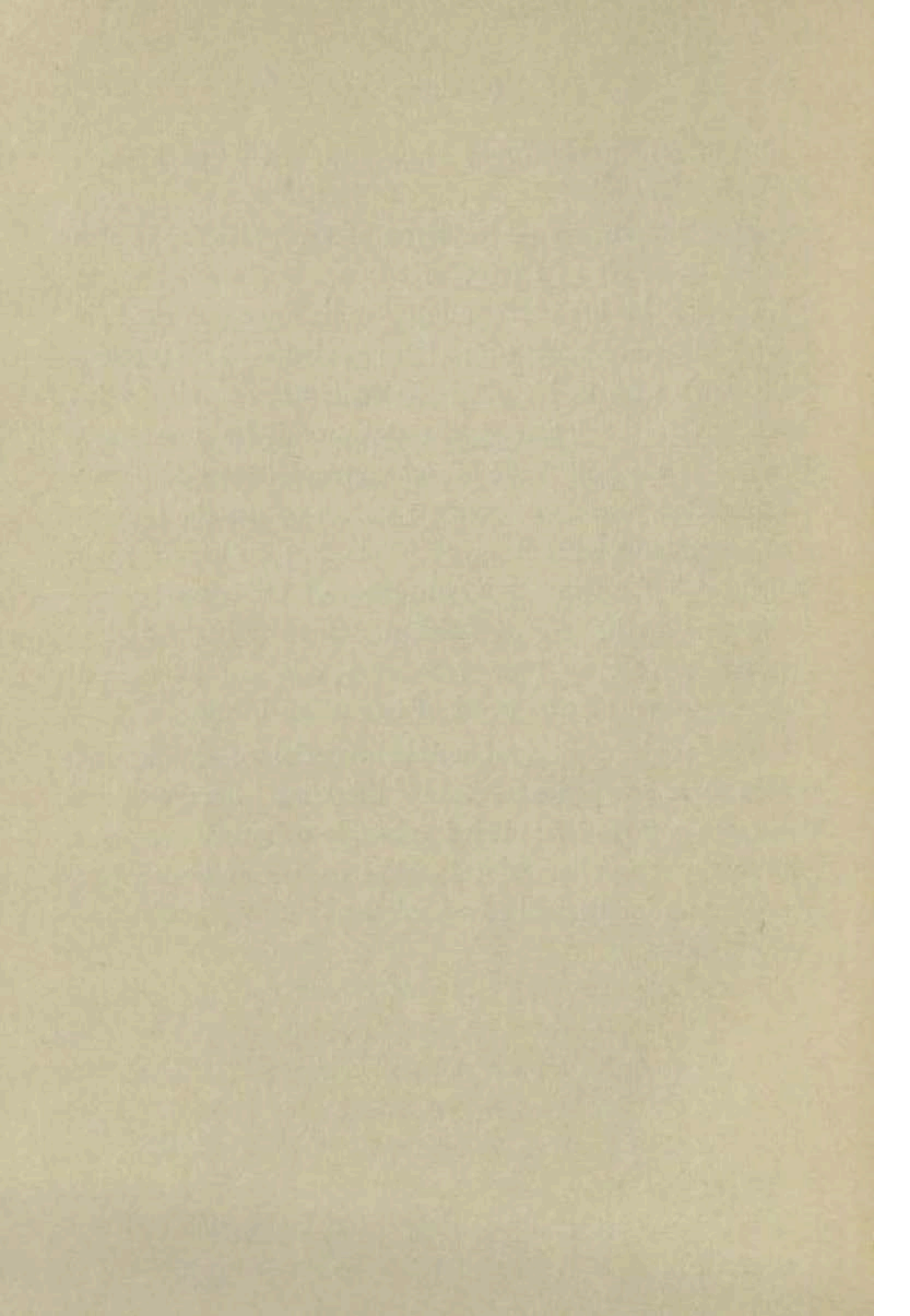
in all other matters—*Sirat-i-Mustaquim*. Stability lies on this path; any other way points to instability and depends upon the experiences and actions of an individual which are not the result of Divine dictation. It is upto man to make or mar his life—but in doing so he must seek the help of God Almighty, and turn to Him for help. This is essential to keep man in his place. Man is not completely independent as the Existentialists say, nor is he completely deprived of any will as the *Jabriah* contend. God Almighty has provided your house with a switch to use the light in your apartments whenever you please, but He has the main switch with Him in His Own House. Of course, when that goes off, the man is finished. But the Main Switch does not go off for fun. It is very, very carefully used; and most often for the good of us human beings.

The reader will find ample material of similar sort within these few pages to set him thinking. I crave toleration from my readers; it is impossible to satisfy everyone. And without intellectual toleration there can be no progress and no intellectual advancement.

آئین تقویٰ ما نیز دانیم
اما چه چاره بابخت گمراه

(مرزا عبدالقادر بیدل)

K. A. Rashid.

21, December, 1959.
Jinnah Central Hospital,
KARACHI.

THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

(1)

KNOWLEDGE, or *'Ilm*, may be likened to Sensation, which is *merely the awareness of a stimulus.* When the stimuli form into a group in Time and Space, the Sensation passes into what is called Knowledge. The element of awareness is indispensable here; for, a Sensation which lies dormant and does not attain to consciousness is akin to a state of ignorance. Space and Time are vehicles of perception; they are not *things perceived*; they are methods of putting sense into Sensation. Sensation, according to Kant, is *unorganised stimulus*, while perception is *organised sensation* and *Science is organised Knowledge.* Knowledge, according to Al-Gazzali, has no length or breadth in Time and Space: it has only depth as its one dimension. Knowledge, according to the Holy Qur'an, is investigation of the objects of Nature, and the making of them subservient to the requirements of Man. Knowledge, according to the Holy Qur'an, is not static; it is dynamic, and leads to intense action. The Holy Qur'an being *'Ilm* or Knowledge, Islam is its dynamic form or Action.

(2)

Real Knowledge or *'Ilm* is the comprehension and investigation of the object known—a quality by which the

ignorant are made wise. It is this knowledge that the Qur'an upholds. It condemns those that seek useless knowledge.[1] Useful knowledge is the real knowledge or 'Ilm, and has depth (*Ilm Batin*); while knowledge of the superficial (*'Ilm-i-Zahir*), the knowledge of length and breadth, is useless knowledge, which hampers the progress of a people. It was for this reason that Islam laid its greatest recommendations on a contact with Matter, which it considers a great driving force.

"Islam, recognizing the contact of the ideal with the real, says YES to the world of Matter and points out the way to master it with a view to discover a basis for a realistic regulation of life."[2]

And for a people to progress, regulation of life is indispensable: but, regulation cannot come without reason, which is synonymous with knowledge; reason and knowledge both endeavour to bring about sequence and order in life; in other words, both reason and knowledge are synonymous with discipline. With knowledge, therefore, come both reason and discipline. This is the foundation of progress.

Look there into the depths of the Mountains; there lie burried, Black, White, and Red minerals; layers upon layers.........and do not forget it is only the possessors of such knowledge who believe and are afraid of God.[3]

Knowledge, then, according to the Qur'an, is to be sought in the depths (*Batin*) of Creation, and not in its superficial appearance (*Zahir*). It does not lie in the leaf,

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[1] The Holy Qur'an, ii : 96.

[2] Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.*

[3] Holy Qur'an.

the face or the flower. It lies in the internal organs of the human body, in the structure of the leaf, and in the perfume of the flower. Sensations of appearance lead to Art, Rhetoric and History, and take one away from a scientific study of the universe, which is real knowledge. An unscientific study of the universe is, therefore, essentially a superficial study which is an indirect method of the study of religion.

"Science reveals to us a universe quite different to all human aspirations.... The spirit of the Qur'an......sees in the humble bee a recipient of Divine inspiration and constantly calls upon the reader to observe the perpetual change of winds, the alternation of day and night, the clouds, the starry heavens, and the planets swimming through infinite space."[1]

It is this conception of knowledge which the Muslims lost sight of some seven hundred years ago. It was this knowledge which the Muslims, when they went into Spain, were equipped with:

"The Arabs raised Spain to a height of prosperity which it has never since attained......they covered the land with......hospitals, and bridges, and with enormous aqueducts which penetrating the sides of mountains, or sweeping on lofty arches across valleys, rivalled the monuments of Rome ......When scarcely a priest in England could translate Latin into his mother tongue, and when even in Italy a monk who had picked up a smattering of mathematics was looked upon as a magician, here was a country in which every child was taught to read and write: in which every town possessed a public library, in which book collecting was a mania......in which paper was manufactured in enormous quantity—in which men of science were making chemical experiments, using Astrolabs in the observatory, inventing FLYING MACHINES."[2]

(3)

Christian Europe did away with the priestly class after

1 Iqbal, *Reconstruction.*

2. W. Reade, *The Martyrdom of Man.*

the Inquisition; the Turks got rid of their priests at the time of Kemalist revolution. They both paved the way for their present progress. In the Middle East, and in this subcontinent, the Muslims could not shake off this influence: they lost sight of the meaning of real knowledge: their priests, obstinate and un-cooperative could not adjust themselves with the modern trends of thought. Themselves deprived of scientific knowledge, they are engrossed in the persuit of something which is anything but knowledge. Old-fashioned interpretations of the scriptures is their main persuit. The Qur'an comprises of scientific information and stresses in its investigations in more than three-fourths of its text. One wonders whether the interpretations of the scriptures which spring like mushrooms are reliable or not. And yet this class has the sole monopoly of religious interpretation. The reasons of our backwardness are, therefore, not far to seek.

It must be clearly understood that for a religious revival it is not necessary that one must be equipped only with religious knowledge; it is also essential that one must equip oneself with the all-round advances made in the various fields of scientific knowlege and the latest trends of modern thought. Having acquired all this, it must then be put to the fullest use to explain religious injunctions. The day-to-day scientific investigations have produced new problems in life, which are hidden from the sight of our 'Ulama, who guide our destiny. The 'Ulama never even anticipated them. The leaders and inspirers

of the most remarkable revivalist movement in the early part of the last century in this subcontinent entirely depended upon a religious sentiment. They were gravely let down by their own people at Balakot. Syed Ahmad Brelvi and Maulana Ismail Shahid never for a moment visualised what advances had been made in the art of war. They never thought of sending a deputation to the Western countries to gain such knowledge, but instead spent their time carrying out an intensive tour of the subcontinent to gather sympathies for the *mujahidin*. It was mainly this that resulted in their defeat, which in our opinion was due to a lack of knowledge of the modren requirements of warfare. It is futile to expect such intelligent anticipations from our 'Ulama. They never see ahead; they are born to move backwards!

The proper pursuit of knowledge, therefore, lies in a scientific study of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, which both contain admirable material for such study. Under the guidance of such knowledge, then, an adjustment will be made in the present-day world to attain national progress. This would be acquiring real knowledge. We shall illustrate this point at some length in the following paragraphs; for, this is an extremely important aspect of our current history.

Real knowledge lies, we have said, in the investigation of the object known. The Holy Qur'an comprises of two portions from the point of view of such knowledge. One

portion comprises of the *Muhkamat*,[1] while the other portion is made up by the *Mutashabehat*[2] verses of the Qur'an. The *Muhkamat* are clear cut injunctions which need no investigations. The *mutashabehat* verses are doubtful verses the exact interpretation of which is not known to the 'Ulama. But, by a process of gradual scientific investigation, the truth of such verses is being established. Before proceeding to explain this vital point further, it is necessary to explain the attitude of the 'Ulama with regard to the same point.

The 'Ulama have considered the *Muhkamat* portion in two ways: one in a general sense and the other in a particular way. In the particular way, they have explained that the *Muhkamat* verses are opposite to the cancelled or abrogated portion or the *Mansukh*, which are referred to as the *Mutashabehat*. In other words the *Muhkamat* verses are self-explanatory, and *Mutashabehat* are difficult to explain. On the basis of this, they have further subdivided the *Mutashabehat* into two categories, *viz.*, the real and the additional. The real type is further explained as not having been elucidated by the Shari'at, and that we do not possess any means to understand them. Hence all means to understand them are closed upon us! Experience to us has, however, shown that the *Mutashabehat* verses are gradually

1. The Muhkamat are fundamentally the basic teaching of the Holy Qur'an-Ummulkitab. The whole Superstructure of the Din of Islam is raised upon these foundations.

2. The Mutashabehat are the verses of which the meaning is doubtful and not yet ascertained. They leave a vast ground for research and investigation, hence progress.

becoming established by a process of investigation and research. The following few examples will illustrate what has been said above.

1. Only a few years ago we did not understand the verses regarding the Pharaoh of Moses. But when the mummy of Rameses II was discovered, the Qur'anic verse pertaining to this part of the ancient history was confirmed, and its truth was established.

2. The sun was supposed to be stationary till recently, while the Qur'an had declared since the day of its revelation, that all the hevenly bodies move in their orbits. The world did not understand what the Qur'an was pointing at; till it was discovered and confirmed that the sun was after all not stationary, and revolved round the earth and its orbit!

3. The history of Cyrus the Great and that of the Wall of Gog and Magog was wrapped in mystery. Only recently, when the statue of Cyrus the Great was discovered, and the Wall of Gog and Magog scaled, were these mysteries solved, and the doubtful verses of the Qur'an were confirmed by this archaeological research.

Innumerable other examples can be cited. But let us see what it boils down to. A certain type of Qur'anic verses called the *Mutashabehat*, the meanings of which were not clear, were confirmed and established by research; they thus assumed the form of the *Muhkamat*! A time will,

therefore, come when there will not be a single doubtful verse left in the Qur'an: the Qur'an will have become full of the *Muhkamat* verses, and its entire truth become established, which at present is apparently hidden from sight. This truth will be proved by scientific discovery. No one will deny the word of God then.

(4)

Herein lies the secret of real knowledge. We want people today to work on the *Mutashabehat* of the Qur'an, and do some research. So far the research has been carried on by Western scientists, who have by their labours unconsciously established certain important Qur'anic truths. The key to worldly progress lies in such investigations: in other words, in the acquiring of such knowledge as is useful for our progress. It was in the Holy Qur'an that knowledge regarding the use of iron was revealed to the Muslims in Surah Hadid. Today, it is the Western nations who are manufacturing steamships, railway engines, motor cars, aeroplanes, and other war materials, etc. When we acted upon this Surah, we also progressed similarly, as shown in the quotation from Winwood Reade. Alas! Our concept of knowledge has changed. Our 'Ulama have spent their time in the *Muhkamat*, which were already established and needed no clarification. Alas! They did not worry about the *Mutashabehat*, and dismissed them as abrogated and *mansukh*. Let it be remembered that there are no cancelled verses in the Holy Qur'an. The idea of abrogation, in the sense it is usually understood, is im-

ported into the religion of Islam by converts from other religions. It is wrong to consider any portion of the Holy Qur'an as such; specially when God Almighty has taken upon himself to safeguard His own word and this is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an. It will not be out of place to mention here, for those who are interested in a deeper study of this problem, that Jalal-ud-Din Ṣayyuti in his *Itteqan* numbers the cancelled verses to about thirty-six; whereas Shah Wali Ullah in *Al Fauz ul-Kabir* has reduced their number to only THREE! There is perceptible a dwindling faith in the acceptance of such a view.

It will have now become clear that worldly progress is impossible without contact with Matter. The large number of *Mutashabehat* verses leave us with a vast field for research and progress. Such verses, it may surprise some to learn, deal with Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, Medicine, Geology, Archaeology, and Psycho-Analysis, etc. Can the 'Ulama, with the type of knowledge they possess, do this?

(5)

A great deal of stress was laid on the two types of knowledge by the 'Ulama, viz., *'Ilm Zahir* and *'Ilm Batin*, that is, the knowledge of Appearance and Reality. The knowledge of Reality, or *Batin*, was completely confined to the soul, while the knowledge of Appearance or *Zahir* was confined to Art, Literature, and History. The inclusion of scientific knowledge, which is real knowledge, was completely omitted. Really speaking, the word *Batin* means

interior or depth. To explain it by an example: the symmetry and proportion in the human body is its beauty which depicts art, order and unity, which may delight our soul; but does not satisfy our enquiry as to what is within that orderly structure, for the survival and sustenance of which we labour in order to keep such sentiments alive. This is the knowledge of Appearance. The information gained on opening the human body by dissection, and investigation of the various functions of its organs that lie within it, is *'Ilm Batin* or the Real Knowledge. Of course, all that lies within the human body pertains to that class of knowledge; and the soul is no exception to it; although where it dwells and why it feels delighted is a problem for every one to solve. Unfortunately, Our 'Ulama simply confined themselves to the investigations of the human soul, and called it the *'Ilm Batin*; whereas, their persual of the external beauties of form came to be known as *'Ilm Zahir*. They thus satisfied their souls only. What a quixotic attitude: it betrays their erotic sensitivity. Their urge to aquire knowledge had overflown into the sense of beauty: and beauty is nothing but that which is sexually desired. Scientific knowledge was thus discarded; and philosophy stepped in to appease their intellectual demands.

The description of the superficial appearance of reality is prose and poetry or, at best, some kind of philosophy. This is not real knowledge. One needs to step forward into the domain of perfume and colour in order to attain real knowledge. It was a grievous mistake on the part of

our 'Ulama to have confined themselves to the secrets of the soul only, and to have discarded the interior of the creation. This negligence today has cost us our ignorance and backwardness. And where has the pursuit after the soul led us to? The height of such pursuit, we learn is, I know that I know not! It does sound very dramatic indeed; but this is not what we desire for progress in this world, where contact between spirit and matter is not prohibited by Islam. What we want today is, that we know what we know, and NOT that, we know that we know not! And in order to know we must grapple with matter to learn how it behaves. This is also the only sure way to know your Creator.

(6)

We have now learnt what real knowledge is. Let us tackle this problem from another angle, and see whether the prevalent conception of knowledge takes us anywhere nearer to our Creator. Sa'adi has well said it :

Keh be 'Ilm natawan Khuda ra shinakht

This, therefore, in the light of the preceding verse of the Qur'an, clearly shows that only those can recognise or find GOD, who possess knowledge; and knowledge we have defined is Science. Do our 'Ulama possess any means to the attainment of that knowledge. We dare say they do not. If this be the test of knowledge, than a final question may be asked: Are we going to continue in the footsteps of the 'Ulama in seeking to gain knowledge, or turn to the

West to take back what we gave it in Spain, which we "raised to a height of prosperity which it has never since attained?"

The answer is obvious: we must take back what knowledge we gave; for, was not this made encumbent upon every Muslim man and woman; and were we not enjoined to seek it, even though it be in China? Surely it was no other but scientific knowledge, which today is non-existent amongst our 'Ulama.

ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIAL CONDUCT

(1)

THE science of human nature is a very late development in the evolution of knowledge. It is even now a very great impossibility, and presents so many difficulties, especially from the point of view of individual consciousness. The only method we have of studying human nature is by a comparison and analysis of other individuals, by noting the effects of mind as shown in their language, customs and institutions. Just throw back your memory to the days when man lived in the Stone Age, and compare his habits with those of your own. What you see projected in the remote past is the human nature in its pristine purity reacting to the environment with all the instinctive forces at its command. And in every case it is reacting in an identically similar manner. The clothing of civilisation and refinement, which you have put upon yourself now, was absent then. Take away this clothing and you are left with the savage man, comprising of a bundle of uncontrolled instincts and urges, the sum total of which remains constant in the mental content of man. Having done this, set yourself to watch your own thoughts, feelings, and volitions, and note their nature also, and note their strength and sequence, and note also their combinations and conflicts. Study them in isolation

and try and obtain a distinct view. You will perceive a distinctly set pattern.

(2)

What is then called human nature is merely a pattern on which Almighty God has fashioned mankind. This pattern comprises of human urges and instincts which react to the environment, thus producing individual conduct. This pattern sometimes bears no control, and is then thought to be evil. God Almighty set the code to regulate this pattern, or, more familiarly, the human nature; for, He knew the mode in which it would react. Human nature, as is usually understood by the English expression, is not *Fatar-an-nas*, nor is it *Fitrat-Allah*. *Fitrat* means the creative power of God Almighty, and *Fatar* is the pattern on which He has created mankind. It is because of this that the moral code which God has sent for the guidance of man is based on this pattern according to which man would behave and react to his environment. The moral code as outlined in the Holy Qur'an is, therefore, the Natural Law governing the behaviour of man. Therefore, this moral code does not neglect the nature of mankind, but is in accord with it. It is for this reason that Islam is called the Natural Religion of man. The main difference in the moral code of Islam and other codes of morality is that, whereas it is mostly a convention in other codes, it is not a conventionality in Islam. It is a set code of rules and injunctions prescribed for various situations resulting from the reactive behaviour of man.

(3)

Human nature is free to act and react by the simple alteration of the tissues of the body and brain, and upon this man has no control whatsoever; yet, and in spite of this, it is not itself alterable. The mental content remains stable and undisturbed, yet predictable. I shall explain this in some detail presently. Control is only obtained by imposing restrictions, when man is made aware of the manner in which he has to behave as the necessity arises. This control is a civilising control. Try and take away this control, and the man is left in his pristine purity of original pattern of instincts and urges, which is nothing but the savage being. It is for this reason that we hear, "Civilisation is skin deep." The savage persists beneath the clothes of civilised man. This is his original pattern, which has now been reformed, or controlled or civilised, by imposing a moral code! But the nature of man remained unchanged. Mark very carefully the following verse of the Holy Qur'an (xxx. 30) :

> To the pattern on which
> He has made mankind :
> No change (let there be)
> In the work (wrought)
> By God : that is
> The standard Religion :
> But most among mankind
> Understand not.

After laying down the code of morals, the Holy Qur'an

has thrown the responsibility of judging man's acts upon the individual himself. This has not only imposed upon him the tiresome duty of discovering his own faults, but also thrown upon him the onerous duty of their rectification and to a great extent of their adaptation. It has thus assumed the colour of a certain amount of severity by forgoing the codification, in that it has shifted its own responsibility on to the man. It is because man is independent to act. If this was not so, what was the sense in reward and punishment that he has been promised ? It is only the deliberate action productive of reflective choice which makes conduct accountable.

(4)

It must be clearly understood that human nature is the sum total of individual instincts and urges which react to environment. This is unaffected by heredity and is hence unalterable. Heredity does not touch the mental content of human nature at all. It is the same for everyone; yet, each individual differs in his physiological make-up, and is thus unique and different from the others. If there is any psychological difference found in the behaviour of man, it is due to varying social conditions, and not because there is any difference between human natures. Man only creates habits; he does not create instinct and reason. Instinct and reason also are in the basic pattern of man. Habit results from the reaction of human nature with the environment. How well has John Dewey put it : "Man has been resolved into a definite collection of primary instincts which may

be numbered, catalogued, and exhaustively described one by one." This is exactly what I have said about the set pattern according to the dictates of the Holy Qur'an. Authorities differ in their lists of the contents; but the list is there!

It is also worth noting here that just as heredity has no influence on human nature, human nature cannot be infected by the original sin of man, as is usually thought by the Christians. Hence it cannot be transmitted. Man is born of pure pattern. Nor can the unconscious trauma affect the future of the human nature, as is wrongly preached by Freud and his followers.

(5)

I have just now mentioned about a control imposed on the human being by God Almighty. What is this control? This is a kind of a brake on the machine of human nature, which the Holy Qur'an calls *Taqwa*! It simply means a command over the resources in order to enlarge the self, to enable man create a balance in his life and occupation by the force of environmental energies. This balance strikes the middle path, the *Sirat-i-Mustaqim*. It enables man to maintain the path of moderation. It is the *Pul Sirat* in the sense that it is very difficult to maintain; not because, it is sharper than the edge of a sword, as is usually believed!

A question now naturally arises: When mankind has been created on a set pattern, where is the need for this control and balance which is demanded of it? This question could only be considered relevant if man had lived alone upon this earth. But, as luck would have it, he is not alone,

but surrounded by other human beings beside himself and who are continuously being effected by his activities and who in turn react vociferously. These human beings that surround him also have certain demands on him. In order to live and let live, this control was essential in order to put a brake on the superfluous acts of man, so that discipline is maintained in society. Says the Holy Qur'an : "Do not create disruption upon this earth, after order has been restored." This is one of the purposes for which man was created, and the significance of his nature.

(6)

Now, another important part of the problem is linked with a belief that God created man in His own image. Let me brush aside this idea as totally un-Islamic; for, it is not supported by any verse in the Holy Qur'an. To dismiss this aspect of the problem, permit me to quote from my own article, "Man The Purpose of His Creation—an-Islamic View," published in the University Oriental College Magazine of November 1957; *Is man created in the Image of God ?*

"It must be clearly understood here, that man cannot be likened to God Almighty, in whatever figurative sense it might be construed; for, there is nothing like unto Him. Unfortunately, a great deal of misunderstanding has arisen due to a verse in the Old Testament, the exact translation of which cannot be authenticated. God Almighty did not create man in His own image. It was man who created God in his own image ! This thought is contrary to the teachings of Hadith and the Holy Qur'an; e.g.

(1) He is unlike anything from amongst His creation. (Hadith).

(2) And nothing from amongst His Creation is like unto Him. (Hadith).

(3) There is nothing which can resemble Him, and He is the hearer of all, and seer of everything. (Qur'an).

But it somehow seems to have entered the teachings of our Holy Prophet (OWBP), where the Prophet is said to have mentioned that God has created man in His own image. In view of the verses just quoted, I am inclined to think that this Hadith is unreliable, although various interpretations have been put forward to explain its significance. But these explanations cannot mutilate the bare fact which the Holy Qur'an has expounded. The Holy Prophet (OWBP) could not have said something contrary to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. This false conception of the likeness of man to God has had far-reaching implications in the history of Islamic thought. Even Mansur Hallaj was misled by this; for, he thought man was essentially divine, because he was created by God in His own image; that is why he further thought God made the angels bow down to Adam. He was further misled on account of this to think that the deity of God enters the human soul, just as the soul at birth enters the human body. This of course is all incorrect, and his theory of *Halul* (Incarnation) is equally untenable. *Halul* (Incarnation) is sprung from the concept of transmigration which has fickle biological foundations, and justification of

either on metaphysical grounds broods of incompetence to think clearly the purpose of this creation. Man has been misled by the attributes of the Almighty, which, although figurative, have been mistaken as primarily human attributes and faculties. God wishes man to copy the Divine attributes in their essence. Unfortunately, instead of elevating his status by their cultivation, and hiding his face in the attributes of the Almighty God, man has hidden God Almighty in his own image ! This is not the purpose of man's creation; it is minimising the concept of God in an anthropomorphic way. "Even so oxen, lions and horses, if they had hands wherewith to grave images, would fashion gods after their own shapes, and make them bodies like their own."

In the end I would again like to emphasise that human nature is unalterable; but predictable. It was for this reason that the angels put in their protest at the inauguration of Adam (first prophet in the line of man) that he would create chaos if choosen the respresentative of God Almighty upon this earth. It is not that the angels had any knowledge of the unseen, but it was because they had seen him behaving, and were fully conversant with the nature he had been bestowed with, and how he would react to the temptations of the world. The greatness of man lies in this very fact that, in spite of the faults in the pattern of his nature, he was still made the representative of Almighty Lord. His greatness lay in his aquisition of knowledge which the Lord Almighty taught him, and not in the daily prostrations of which the angels made a boast of.

FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD AND THE EVOLUTION OF MIND.

(I)

IN the scheme of creation the process of evolution is an admitted fact. It is not our intention to enter into a detailed analysis of the different aspects of animal, vegetable, and mineral worlds; we shall however, confine ourself to the study of the evolutionary aspects of man alone; tracing his mental development from Adam to the last of the line of Prophets (OWBP). And without disputing either that man has undergone some sort of evolution in the initial stages of his development, let us consider for a moment whether that evolution is still continuing or has culminated in the final mental perfection of man, and also that he needs no further spiritual enhancement for the completion of the purpose for which he was created.

The Western and some of our Eastern scholars seem to think, that man is yet imperfect and is still evolving mentally and physically. Working on this presumption, they put forward the view that the shape of the future skull of man will vary in proportions to what it is today, so that his head will be much larger to accommodate the growing brain which would enlarge to adjust the increasing mental faculties of man. But when we study the history of the intellectual development of man, this fact does not appear

to fit into the scheme of things. Nor do the Emergent and Creative evolutions go to support this hypothesis. And, in so far as the physical development of man is concerned, to say that he is still evolving, is to set afloat a hypothesis which does not even possess a remote possibility of concurrence with any anthropological evidence.

(2)

Man's physical evolution stopped a very long time ago; in fact, this happened even before man (INSAN) grew to be called Adam! Adam, besides being the culmination of the physical development of man to its logical perfection, had also acquired a receptive mind which could be instructed.

لقد خلقنا الانسان فی احسن تقويم (والتين)

"We have created man (INSAN) in the best of proportions". The word TAQWEEM (تقويم) pertains to physical proportions alone which have reached perfection in man. These perfect proportions are the culmination of the process of evolution. There have been indeed no mal-proportions in the early man before Adam, as is sometimes made out from the discovered skeletal remains of various geological periods. Even what we call the pre-historic man had finally settled down in perfect symmetrical proportions before the time of Adam's inaugeration as the Vicegerent of God on earth.

It is sometimes put forward that the Jaw of the early

man was much larger, and his Frontal bones more protruding. This is not due to any evolutionary discrepancy, but the Jaw had enlarged due to the extreme use of it on account of the raw type of food man was prone to eat before the days of the fire. Similarly if the Frontal bone protruded, it was more due to the demanour of the early man who was used to staring to keep himself vigilent. The climate also had effect on the skin and hair of man. They did not vary due to any inherent evolutionary process, but changed according to external circumstances of weather.

The physical evolution of man had thus come to a halt in the earliest man. And although the physical evolution of man had come to a stand still, the mental state was yet in its infancy at the stage when man had become physically perfect. The conscious mind had not yet fully developed. Man was in the Unconscious, or the primitive state of mind. It is this aspect of the Man which requires closer study to finally localise the stage in which man achieved his mental and spiritual perfection. Let us study them dispassionately in some detail today.

(3)

At the time of Adam's inaugeration as the Vicegerent of God on earth, the human mind had not yet developed completely as we have said. The mind was even insuffeciently formed so as to be capable of inventing SIN in its entirety. The two prominent earliest instincts of man which influenced his life were the instincts of Sex and Hunger. The instinct or the urge to power came much later. Hence

the earliest injunctions were meant to control his sexual life; thereafter came rules regarding the lawful things which he could eat; and lastly came detailed instructions regarding the government of the state and man's dominions. Hence quite naturally the earliest sins that prevailed pertained to the urges of sex and hunger ! It would be interesting to note, that at the time the Holy Quran was being revealed the revelations which the Holy prophet Muhammad (OW BP) received, came down again in the same order, which had actually been revealed from time to time in piece meal from the time of Adam to the time of the last of the prophets (OWBP). The order of this revelation was verses pertaining to morals (اخلاقیات), followed by verses pertaining to the state (سیاسیات). It was a socio-political system based on sound moral foundations.

The society had at that stage been very simple, and only a few sins had been discovered, as we have already mentioned. Therefore, only simple laws were required to keep the society in a perfect state. Probably, the first law promulgated was the sacred relationship between man and woman in the form of a wife and husband, a distinction which probably did not exist before the time of Adam. Adam and Eve were also probably the first lawfully wedded couple ! As mankind multiplied, the needs of this minature society grew and became complex; sin multiplied and became grave. It made social relationship intricate, which in turn resulted in social chaos. When control was imposed upon man, it led him to think of the values of life round

him, particularly because, he was surrounded by other human beings like himself, and upon whom his own conduct was reflecting.

(4)

As the time passed, man became conscious of an All-Prevading Power. He percieved certain awe-inspiring phenomenon in the creation around him. He became conscious of an Almighty Being, which was controlling his destiny. Some instructions were required from time to time for the guidance of mankind, and these instructions could only be made practicable by awe-inspiring him, i.e., man. It is for the first time in the history of our scriptures, that we see in the time of Noah, some clear directions for the worship of One God. A clear concept of One God the Creator, the Destroyer, and the Sustainer, is the culmination of perfection of the mental development of man : it is the highest faculty of human mind. It is from here that we perceieve a stage of finalisation of evolution of the human mind taking a concrete form of the dogma of Tawhid (توحید). We therefore, see Noah condemning polytheism (شرک). Yet, and in spite of this, we find in the immediately following periods to Abraham, polytheism assuming philosophical proportions. Man's grasp on this subtle dogma was week. His mind was still being prepared to accept this concept. But man soon stumbled to worship other gods beside the One God Almighty. From thence onwards we see polytheism taking deep roots in the mind of man. Idol-worship had become a common practice.

Hence arose the necessity of guidance for the correct worship of the Only One and True God. Human minds which, from thence onwards refused to accept the unadulterated dogma of Tawhid (توحید) remained immature; for the culmination of mental evolution is to accept that there is no God but He. Unity is necessarily connected with perfection, as number and variety are the inevitable consequences of limitation and imperfection. It became necessary to improve the mental faculties of man in order to enable him to grasp with renewed strength the idea of One God, the sole Master of the universe. Man thus gradullay progressed towards the completion of his mental evolution. There is, therefore, One absolutely perfect Being, and that is the Almighty Creator. Great stress was hence laid on this doctrine of Tawhid, to enable man grasp as much of it as he could. It was the intention of God Almighty to make the Truth manifest; this could only be done by finalising the evolution of the human mind. The concept of Tawhid is therefore, a measure of the completion of mental evolution of man. It is for this reason again, that Islam has laid the greatest stress on pondering the works of creation, including man himself, to realise the majesty of the Lord Almighty. A knowledge of the existence of Almighty God, is therefore, a pre-requisite to the mental development of man.

(5)

The time of Adam, it will be recalled, was the initial civilising period in the life-histroy of man, and the time of Noah was a period in which man made a distinction between

polytheism and Unityism, i.e., Shirk and Tawhid. In other words it was the stage of transition to a higher mental state. Man had begun to receive something which he did not hitherto have. And he did receive it in such a way, that he knew it was being given to him. The content of this reception was Revelations, with which we shall presently deal. By the time of Noah, the foundations of a restricted Shariat (شریعت) had been laid to produce some dignity in society. It is the concept of the Almighty God and a belief in Him, which dignifies the beholder. (مالكم لا ترجون لله وقارا (نوح which clearly indicates that if you place your trust in His Greatness He will dignify you. This concept of Tawhid had progressed in the time of Abraham, and similarly we see this concept further developing in the time of Moses, when the human mind had further evolved. It was thought necessary then that a law be now revealed to suit the increasing requirements of mankind which had enormously multiplied. Such directions were to cover the daily needs, inclusive of the religious urges; and due to the expanding spiritual needs, the relationship between the body and mind was made clear to him, and thus the door of revelation was kept open for the welfare of mankind. From the history of scriptures, it is not easy to make out the difference between the natural religion of man (Islam) and Kufr, especially in so far as it concerns the period before the time of Noah. But indeed, in the time of Abraham, man had progressed to the stage of belief in One God, and had come to know several of His Attributes, as we see him making the following supplications to the Almighty Creator, "My

Lord ! Show me how Thou givest life to the dead ?" (II : 260)

رب ارنی کیف تحی الموتیٰ

Man in the time of Moses had further progressed mentally and had acquired some further knowledge of the remaining Attributes of the Almighty Lord; in fact, having actually experienced and witnessed all most all His Attributes, Moses now aspires for the Beatific Vision. We see him addressing the Almighty Lord, thus; "O My Lord show Thyself to me, that I may look upon Thee". (VII : 143)

رب ارنی النظر الیک

It clearly shows that one had advanced more than the other, in his knowledge of the Attributes of the Almighty Lord, and therefore, in his mental evolution. This is clear from the fact that whereas one demands to witness one Attribute only, the other wishes to see the Almighty himself ! This is certainly a definite progress in the mental development of the two prophets (OWBP), and Moses was far advanced in this respect. But still the mental evolution had not finalised. It was to persue its course further. It must also be appreciated that Abraham had prayed to witness a single Attribute only whereas Moses had beseached for a fuller vision of the Divine Being. The mental development had thus far progressed in the time of Moses, since the time of Noah and Abraham. Each one had desired to confirm his own belief in his own peculiar stage of development.

(6)

Now, during the gradual progress of evolution in the periods we have mentioned, it will also be noticed that the nature of commands from the Lord had from their original rudimentry forms changed to the form of more elaborate instructions in the time of our Holy Prophet (OWBP), because mental evolution had now reached its climax. The previous prophets had merely asked for the disclosure of certain Attributes; or, in the case of Moses, the Divine Vision itself. But Muhammad (OWBP) did not make any such request to convince himself of the Omnipotence of the Almighty Lord. He had experienced all the Attributes. His status in the spiritual field was much higher than his predecessors. Instead of his asking for any such vision, he himself was ushered into the Divine presence. The mind had undergone its full evolution, and was now prepared for the reception of the Ultimate Grace. Says the Holy Quran;

ثم دنا فتدلیٰ ○ فکان قاب قوسین او ادنیٰ○

"Then he approached, and came closer. And was at a distance of but two bow lengths, or even closer". (LIII : 8 & 9). From now onwards revelations which had been indirect became direct, as there were more details to be given for the general guidance of mankind, regarding the finer aspects of life. Even the very pronunciation of the Holy Writ was clarified before the closing down of a revelation. Human mind had now reached the peak of its development. Listen to the Holy Quran, what it says; "This day have I perfected your Religion, for you; completed my favours upon you,

and have chosen for you ISLAM as your DIN (Religion)". (V : 4)

اليوم اکملت لکم دينکم و اتممت عليکم نعمتی و رضيت لکم اسلام دينا

This perfection was a mental perfection of Mankind. It was not the perfection of any one instinct of the human mind, but the perfection of all the instincts of the human mind, as expressed in the word DIN (دین). This word as opposed to the word Religion represents the whole man. The word Religion on the other hand merely expresses the sense of an indeology which is only a one-sided view of the human personality. Man was, therefore, spiritually and mentally perfected. The evolution of the Human Mind therefore, came to a close with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (OWBP). It was only for this reason that revelation was closed for all time, and the Prophet Muhammad (OWBP) placed a Seal on the line of prophets.

The revelations which were sent down upon the other prophets, were explained to the people in the language of the prophets, and not in the language in which it had been disclosed. But in the case of the last of the prophets (OWBP) the very words of the Almighty Lord were conveyed to the people in their minutest details and preserved for all times in the very manner they had been revealed to the messenger of God (OWBP). And the Lord Almighty took upon Himself to preserve and safe-guard them. Says the Holy Quran; "It is We who have revealed this Quran upon you; and We are its protectors".

انا نحن نزلنا الذکر و انا له لحافظون

In the case of the previous Scriptures God Almighty had not taken upon Himself to safeguard the Scriptures, but He had entrusted this responsibility to the learned amongst the people. It was not the intention of the Almighty to preserve them for all times, as they were not permanent instructions, and the mind was still evolving. Permanent instructions were to be revealed later in the Holy Quran when the human mind was to have completely assumed its mature form, and these instructions were to hold good for all time. The evolution of the human mind having reached its culmination was perfected. Man had now reached the stage of physical and mental perfection. Prophethood was thus sealed forever.

(7)

Some scholars are under the impression that the evolution of mind is still in its infancy, because of the inventions man is making every day which to them appears to point to a necessity of evolution ! It must be appreciated that inventions are not a measure of the mental development of man. Inventions are really the creation of forms which are continuations and elaborations of pre-existing ideas. They are an accummulative phenomenon which progresses through the ages on a single idea of man. Anything that the human mind is capable of concieving he is capable of creating. It is only a matter of time and duration which he takes to evolve. The only thing man cannot concieve is God Almighty Himself; for, if he were able to do that, he would be limiting God in time and space, which is an

impossibility. The only thing man can concieve about God Almighty is His Attributes, but not His Personality or Essence. Attributes are discernable from sensible objects which extend in time and space. But the Essence of God Almighty cannot be thus limited to time and space. It was because of this that man faltered while searching to locate His Personality. He discovered only His Attributes which he symbolised, but could not create the like of Him; for, He is unlike anything from amongst His creation. He is unlike anything that can be concieved by the mind of man. It must also be understood that this duration which I have just mentioned above with regard to inventions is merely a continuation of the progress which the human mind makes. It gnaws into the future, and swells as it advances.

The concept of the Finality of Prophethood is based on the fact that man has finally evolved to perfect proportions, mentally and physically. His mind became capable of reception of the final commands of Almighty after which no more commands would be received. The final word of the Lord is self-contained for all times having been issued at a time when man had become physically and mentally fully evolved. To say that there would be future revelations and prophets is to admit that man has not yet completely evolved, and that the Holy Word which was revealed upon the last of the prophets (OWBP) is not complete in every respect to suit the spiritual and physical requirements of human society. The Holy Quran, indeed is the last Word and the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (OWBP) is the last in the line of prophets and is their Seal.

ISLAMIC CIVILISATION VERSUS WESTERN CIVILISATION

(I)

LET me make it clear at the outset, that I do not agree with Rene Grousset, when he argues his thesis of the destruction of civilisations. In what he says, "No civilisation is destroyed from without unless it has first brought about its own ruin," he really means, 'a people' or a 'nation.' Civilisations in my opinion do not die; they merely change hands or locations. Civilisations at the same time implement each other and do not oppose each other. He is also wrong when he says, "Civilisation does not resist for ever." It not only resists but also persists through all adversities. It leaves ample traces on the sands of time which have to be perceived through an untinted sight.

In the English dictionary, the words Civilisation and Culture both mean a state of refinement. Spengler uses both these terms synonymously, and most other authors do the same. I am inclined to think differently. With scientific advancement and industrial progress, the term civilisation has come to mean : the gathering together of scientific knowledge, in order to safeguard the cultural creations, which pertain to manner and customs of the arts of life. Culture, which is not the product of abstract thought, lacks scientific investigations, and pertains to domestic life

of a people only; while civilisation, being the outcome of abstract thought, is goaded on by scientific investigation, and concerns the world outside the home. There is, therefore, never a clash between the culture and civilisation of a people; on the other hand, civilisation provides safeguards for the flourishing of culture. Nor was there ever a conflict between the different civilisations. Where one ended, the other took over for the perpetuation of humanity, which is the unconscious goal of all nations. It is the nation and its people that die, but never the civilisation.

(2)

Toynbee's denial of the 'Unity of Civilisation' is surprising. Any civilisation is the child of its predecessor, grown into manhood. They, of necessity, merge into each other and are hence continuous. While the preceding hands over to the succeeding, the later improves upon it, and the process continues as a unified whole. Nothing beyond this ought to mean by the 'Unity of Civilisation.'

Religion in the days prior to Islam primarily moulded the culture of a people. Islam infused a spirit of scientific investigation into the soul of civilisation, which today is the main source and impetus of its advance and progress. Islamic civilisation is not dead. It is the moving force in the modern civilisation which has been named as the Western civilisation. The Western civilisation is not a Christian civilisation either, as some may think; Christ was born in the East ! In the light of what I have just now said, Spengler's historical Psuedomorphosis seems equally untangible.

What ever may have been behind the Islamic civilisation, it cannot be denied that the vigour of this rapidly spreading force had the impetus of Islam at its back. This affected the future destiny of Europe. Its entire garb in the future centuries was to remain the same as its weavers had fashioned it. Spengler is at some pains to deal with the Muslim arts, poetry, and mysticism; but he is far away from the real issue of Islamic civilisation, whose main stress lay on the achievement and accumulation of scientific knowledge. He is lost in the Magian soul, and does not seem to discover the real spirit, which Islam infused into what we call today the Western civilisation.

(3)

In order to dwell upon the subject fully, I have to traverse a wider field to describe the historical development of the subject I have undertaken to discuss. I will, therefore, divide it into the following few paragraphs :

(1) Islamic Achievements in the West;
(2) The Crusades and After;
(3) The Renaissance;
(4) The Inquisition, and
(5) Scientific Investigation in Europe and its Civilisation.

Islamic Achievements in the West

The sudden change which the world experienced at the advent of Islam was its civilising influence based upon the relationship between Man and his Creator. The Islamic

civilisation therefore represented the Whole Man, whereas, the previous civilisations only represented certain instincts in the Man. In the embellishment of Islamic civilisation, therefore, all the arts and sciences got mingled together to form a decorative pattern. Even the industry became an art. Today, all art has become industry. This is one of the main differences between the Islamic civilisation and the Western civilisation. One represented the Whole Man, the other only certain aspects of him, whose individual urges swept him away from the real purpose of life.

It is the habit of civilisations to have parallel existence in their own state of refinement and development, at the same time reinforcing the leading civilisation which has absorbed all the past. Each commands its own position, and acts as the torch-bearer to the other, till such time the other has evolved new dimensions to suit the progressing times, and out-steps the bounds of its predecessor, which loses value as an expanding force, but stays as the basic pattern.

Undoubtedly, Islamic civilisation took over the heritage of the Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Persians. All in them was absorbed by the Muslims; and all that is now to be found in the Western civilisation was absorbed from Islamic sources; and all that exists in the Western civilisation today will be found incorporated in the future civilisation of tomorrow. But, it goes without saying, that the present-day Western civilisation started as a result of the impact of Islamic civilisation. Western civilisation is not a Christian

civilisation, as I have just said. Christianity was born outside the domain of the Western world. Had the Crusades succeeded, there would perhaps have been no Islamic civilisation; for it had not yet evolved.

From its very onset Islam evolved a society based on the acquisition of knowledge, toleration, and equality. This was the superstructure of its civilisation, while its foundations lay on the firm rock of relationship between Man and his Creator. From its limited resources, it gathered together the wisdom of the by-gone people; new vistas of research were opened out and scientific investigations started to explain some of the vital verses of the Holy Qur'an that immediately affected the progress of Muslim life. The first attacks were aimed at Nature itself. Astronomy, Physics, and Irregation were the first targets. Side by side with this developed the arts of Warfare, Agriculture and Architecture, both defensive and religious.

The Crusades and After

By the time the Crusades had started, Islam was ruling over almost the whole of the Middle East, and the Byzantine Empire was threatened in its western domain of the Fertile Crescent. This conflict infused a spirit of scienific investigation and invention, in just the same manner as happened during the last two world wars, when there was a race for scientific inventions. The Muslims achieved a great deal. Perhaps their achievement was no less than the invention of Atom Bombs in these days ! They invented the gun-

powder and artillery was evolved. Hydraulics and defensive architecture were created. The Cursades weakened the Byzantine Empire and extended the Islamic rule to the Straits of Gibraltar and into the very heart of the continent of Europe. By this time Islam had also spread into India and China, and the Muslims were fast acquiring the knowledge of these people.

Islam passed on to Spain. Here a most dramatic change took place. It was the nearest spot to all the Continental places from where knowledge could be dispersed with equal ease to all the European countries. Europeans flocked to this centre of civilisation in great numbers to acquire the arts and sciences of life. They wore Muslim garments and spoke the Islamic language. We feel amazed at the modern houses fitted with the latest sanitary fittings. During the days of Islam in Spain, houses were fitted with hot and cold water pipes with bathrooms having floors of marble tiles. Ecclesiastics from throughout Europe thronged the universities of Spain. Several learned men from England are reported by Western historians to have come and sat at the feet of Muslim scholars who taught to all alike. Peter, the Venerable, and people like the French Ecclesiastic Gerber, known as Sylvester II, took pride in wearing Muslim garments and conversing in the language of the Qur'an. The Muslims laid beautiful gardens, the delicious fragrance of whose flowers was conveyed through corridors to the main buildings, a system which has been applied in several buildings in the twentieth century in England. Perhaps equally good

arrangements existed in the days of Queen Semi Ramis who laid the foundations of the Hanging Gardens in Babylon. The Muslims developed music which today forms the basis of the Western music. In India, they completely transformed the Indian classical music, and invented musical instruments which are known after their names.

The houses of the Muslims had polished floors, in spite of the fact they had no cement in those days. All the household furniture which we today attribute to Western civilisation was invented by the Muslims and still carries Arabic names. The words table, chair, and sofa testify to their ingenuity, and refined cultural tastes.

Streets were first seen to have lights in Europe in Muslim Spain. The streets were properly paved, and planned. Fruit cultivation advanced a great deal. Different types of flowers were cultivated. The art of grafting fruit and flowers was developed. For the purpose of facilitating irrigation, hydraulic work and artificial lakes were constructed. Difficult surgical operations were being performed in well-organised operation theatres, and evidence exists that even mechanical experiments on flying machines were in vogue. But, of course, there were no automobiles and atom bombs, and wireless or photography. The credit of these modern inventions must go to the Western civilisation. But it has recently been discovered that some sort of electricity was being produced in the first century B.C. in Babylon. A complete cell with electroplating apparatus has been excavated.

It will now have become clear that after the Muslims had established themselves well in Spain, they went headlong for evolving a civilisation. That had to be, for the conditions had become settled, and the arts of life had to be invented to make the people comfortable after their struggle for initial survival. They made great strides in every walk of life which left its stamp on every activity of the later-day West. It was not merely a spade work. They dug up the foundations of older civilisations and laid bare their achievements upon which they raised an enviable structure which became difficult for the West to discard in the later days of their victory. The present-day Western civilisation had therefore continued to work on the superstructure of the Muslims, the foundations of which had been laid by them on earlier civilisations. Inventions come in with gradual work. Things are invented again and again. But each time they were improved upon. Originality and invention are not the monopoly of any one people; it is a continuous process which is indebted to several minds spread over centuries. "Many of the essential inventions of civilised life have been invented over and over again. In distant times and countries, as different nations have reached those particular points of social advancement when those inventions were first needed."

The present-day Western civilisation is a grown-up child of the Islamic civilisation. We have, therefore, nothing to be frightened of. We have now to carry on from where the West will leave over to us, as the decline of the

West is now imminent. Even if we have to adopt their language to acquire their knowledge, we shall have to do so. We may even have to take to the Western type of garments; for, they are most suitable for this machine age; unless we can mould the shape of their machine to suit our cumbersome dress ! This of course is not possible. Even the modern Western dress is a development of the Muslim dress in the West. We should, therefore, have no hesitation in taking it back. It will be worth while pointing out here that dress and language is not the monopoly of any nation. These two things belong to civilisation and civilisation alone. The language and dress of civilisation continues till the nation taking over can evolve a better one to suit its own times and conditions. It is noteworthy that Prof. Hitti considers the Islamic civilisation as their "Half Sister," and having a "firm footing on the Continent."

The Renaissance

Renaissance having started in Italy in the eleventh century A.D. was interrupted by Muslim invasions, and their subsequent conquests. This attracted the intelligentsia of European countries to Islamic cultural centres thus diverting the Renaissance energies into Muslim channels. Renaissance therefore merged with the Muslim civilising efforts. This continued for five centuries. "The inability of the Italian states to unite their mortal feuds, under the very eyes of the 'barbarians,' ended by delivering them over to the Spanish rule. For three centuries the Italian lost his 'Fatherland.' To this loss he adapted himself very well."

Uptil the modern times, the only country in Europe, which has influenced the trend of thought of its people, is Germany. And the entire German thought is non-European. It has driven its inspiration from the spiritual climate of the Mediterranean, which had been predominantly influenced by Islamic thought and civilisation.

European Renaissance thus received its vigour and inspiration from the Islamic centres of civilisation in that continent, for a considerably long time. The spread of Muslim light was followed in the Christian lands by heresy. The crushing of heresy in the south of France lead to the wave of Inquisition.

The Inquisition

The religions history of all nations has experienced such periods during their life-time. It is, therefore, nothing to be wondered at that the Christian world passed through this phase of fanatical and heretical intrigues. What is really to be wondered at is that they got over these bad days. The Muslims are unfortunately still struggling to get out of this rut !

However, it was the time of atrocities. "Ecclesiastical vengeance rioted in luxury." Intellectual revolts spread in every direction of Catholic Europe. It was Innocent the III who put an end to this, by permitting the study of Aristotle's dialectics, which came through the Arabic channels ! All this was being done under the shelter of the Church.

In other words, the Church and the Inquisition were part of the environment of European science in the thirteenth century. Gregory the IX was eighty when he was made a Pope, and he deliberately organised the Inquisition. He is also said to have postponed the Renaissance by a hundred years by putting up the fight with Frederick II. I am inclined to think that the reason why Inquisition had to be enforced was the failure of the Crusades, which was virtually the failure of the Christian Church, and which produced a secret doubt in the minds of the Christians regarding the Divine origin of their faith. The defeated Crusaders returned to their country to slay their own kith and kin in a frenzy of mental protest. Inquisition, however, stamped out the heretics by introducing orthodoxy. It is interesting to note that Inquisition never took hold of England, from where people kept on pouring into Muslim Spain to acquire knowledge.

Scientific Investigations in Europe and its Civilisation

This in short is the history of development of the Western civilisation. No epochs ever emerge with comparative suddenness, as Whitehead seems to think. It is always a gradual emergence, as outlined in the theory of Emergent Evolution. The newly emerged society covers its adversities and consciously hides the achievements of its predecessors, so as to make it look as if nothing existed before its own advent. It takes the credit of having achieved everything overnight ! This is only a partial truth, and against the facts of history. Therefore, the emergence of Western

civilisation was not a sudden phenomenon. The process of taking over from the Islamic civilisation centres had been in force quite for some time. When the Muslims faded out off the European scene, the Europeans had absorbed everything that was Islamic, and were continuing on the same lines in their own countries. Western civilisation it is evident, did not emerge overnight. It took at least three centuries for the West to acquire all that has been accumulated by the Muslims in Spain. It was actually in the sixteenth century that the rise of modern science began; and it was Bruno's martyrdom which ushered in this era in Europe (1600 A.D.). From this date starts the European reformation period, by which I understand that the Europeans gathered together all that they had learnt in the Islamic universities. All the Islamic sciences were restored in the minds of the Europeans. The inventions of the Muslims had already started to stimulate the minds of the European scholars. The Spain of the Middle Ages formed an admirable training-ground for the intellectuals of Europe. And all that we find today in the Western civilisation is the outcome of Islamic civilisation, the seeds of which were sown in Europe by the Muslims.

(4)

After having discussed various aspects of the two civilisations, it now remains to be seen in what manner we ought to accept the Western civilisation. To the orthodox Muslim the Western civilisation is repugnant; for the average it is obnoxious. There is a cry in the Muslim world, "Back to

the days of the Khalifs." This is not practicable. A Muslim has to carry himself forward. He has no need to be scared of imaginary phobias. With a little reorientation and readjustment of his outlook, a Muslim can fit himself anywhere. He can observe all the religious injunctions while living in the most up-to-date Western society. It must not be lost sight of that there are Muslims living outside the predominantly Muslim countries. They live a wholesome life; perhaps, more wholesome than what we are accustomed to see amidst ourselves in these days, and in our own countries. A living nation lives to move forward. It looks back only to review its mistakes and take a lesson. We should therefore not hesitate to accept all that is utilitarian and ignore the ignoble. The greatest stress has been laid on the acquisition of knowledge in Islam. It is one of the very few passports to human salvation and recompense. And what after all is civilisation but the acquisition and application of knowledge which word, according to the definitions of Islam is scientific knowledge. For the acquisition of this God has made Nature subservient to Man. He can conquer it and make himself comfortable.

(5)

I have maintained that civilisations do not die; they merely change locations at the downfall of nations. It is the nations that die and not the civilisations. Let us probe into the causes of the downfall of the Muslim nation which resulted in the overtaking of the Islamic civilisation by the West. Such causes have been variously discussed by emi-

nent scholars in the past and also in the present day. I will only mention the name of three such scholars; and they are: (1) Ibn Khaldun, (2) Allama Shakaib Arslan and (3) Toynbee. There is some variation in their line of thought. It is probable that each has been influenced according to the defects perceptible in his own time and country. There have been several others who have devoted much attention to this subject, but they have profited from the sources left to us by the three above-mentioned scholars. I have been constrained to see that one of the most important and glaring causes of the downfall of the Muslim nation has been left out by all. *I take liberty to put it forward for the first time in the history of Muslim thought.* This cause is Polygamy ! I am sure some will jump at this suggestion; but there is no need to get horrified. Just let me explain it to you. The intrigues of the Harem have upset empires, and have caused so much murder as was never caused in Europe even in the days of the Inquisition. The cause was Polygamy. Heirs from different wives were set against each other to achieve the throne and supremacy. Ladies of the Harem have taken active part in hatching intrigues against their step-sons. The law of inheritance in Islam was utilised to cover up these follies. Brothers were blinded and fathers, once emperors, were put in prisons, to satisfy the intrigues of the royal retinue. The public divided to side with the claimants. Thus a split was created in the nation. This went on and on; till the entire energy was spent out, and no attention was paid to the welfare of the people. This cause took deep root from the time of the 'Abbasids, and the seeds of destruction of the

Muslim nation were sown as early as that period. Ladies of low birth found their way into the Harems quite unbefitting the dignity of the royal personages. Society became undignified. Civilisation was diluted. Each strain of blood brought in its own influence, which in course of time was responsible for diluting the pure ideas of simple Islam. The conception of religion was changed. The very fundamentals were shaken to the core. And eventually, when Islam burst forth out of Arabia, passing through the varied lands, its shape had changed a great deal. In India, the entire shape of Islam is Persian. This was further amalgamated with local influences by intermarriages with the people of this country, resulting in the present form of our religion which we see today, and which completely refuses to accept any adjustment beyond its own conceptions, which are themselves adulterated. The pristine purity of Islam was lost in this manner. Its vigour was exhausted by passage through improper channels. People of necessity became slack in its true observance, which affected further probing into the field of knowledge. Intellectual effort became individual. Poetry and pastime took the place of physiology and physics; music replaced mechanics. After the ninth century of the Muslim era the entire superstructure of Islam was shaken. As the Muslim armies passed into different countries, and the soldiers of Islam had to keep away for long periods from their families, the relevant verses of the Qur'an were interpreted to suit people's whims, and each one was given the privilege to marry up to four wives, without the least regard to the restrictions imposed by the Qur'an and the example

set by the Holy Prophet (OWBP). Such was the state of Muslim society. In India, the Muslims did not produce a single outstanding scholar who could reform Muslim society except a few poets and historians. Mujaddid Alif thani and the family of Shah Wali Ullah indeed tried to improve matters; the results of the political awakening envisaged in the philosophy of Iqbal remains to be seen. However, this is beyond the point. My contention is that polygamy has been one of the causes of the downfall of Muslim nation and its civilisation. Since Turkey abolished polygamy, its conditions have improved. There is more cohesion and solidarity in the Turkish nation than we see in any other Muslim country. The main defect of polygamy is that it causes disruptions within the nation. All unity is lost. Its psychological implications are tremendous. Children from different mothers grow up in the same homes, under adverse psychological environments which create fatal complexes in these young people. And when they grow to maturity, there is a deep-rooted rivalry, either for attainment of the wealth, or for the usurpation of the throne. This effects the morale of the nation at large. It brings to the front petty intrigues and puts into the background the more vital needs of the nation which calls for their welfare and progress. The nation dwindles and its civilisation goes into hibernation, till such time as its people are able to take it out and revitalise it; otherwise it is absorbed by the new nation which takes it over.

THE NATURE OF HUMAN SOUL

(1)

THE question of Soul has vexed the minds of Philosophers since time immemorial. In spite of the fact that, during the last few centuries, science has had a materialistic outlook, there has been a tendency to locate the centre of movement in the Matter; for, the matter being itself inert (*vis, inertiae*), all movement occuring in it must be caused by some immaterial force, namely God. "But the human body movement is caused by a special immaterial force, the soul, and the soul, being immaterial, is immortal, and possesses a consciousness independent of the body."

Andrew Baxter (1686—1750), an emminent Philosopher, while discussing the nature of the human Soul, supports a similar argument by the phenomena of dreams, which are due to direct spiritual influences. (We shall discuss later on, in this essay, that the phenomena of dreams is a totally different world altogether, in which the function of the soul is revealed as something other than movement !)

Without entering into the implications of a definition, let it be sufficient to recall that the soul has been variously called as the Consciousness, Mind and Behaviour. But the belief has all along been that the soul is the cause of movement in the human body : in other words, Mind is the

expression of Behaviour; and Co-ordination in movement shows the state of Mind. Hence modern individual psychology defines itself as the science of decipherment of human behaviour; for, it is the human activity that reveals the Mind. Mind and Soul, therefore, are not only synonymous terms, but also interconvertible. This is about all we know of the nature of the Human Soul so far. Let us advance a little further and study a couple of the verses of the Holy Qur'an. Presently, we shall see that Reality of the Soul is unknowable and what we have so far understood of the soul is all wrong. We are much farther away from the nearest approach. Just as the question of soul is a vexed one for us today, so has it been perplexing for millenniums past. In the days of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace), the question used to tickle the Jews, and they could not solve the mystery. With a view to seek a solution, and also to fathom the depth of the Prophet's knowledge, they very often frequented his assemblies of discussions. One day they asked a question concerning the soul. Back came the prompt revelation in reply to their question: "Say, the Soul is from the Lord, and ye have been given but meagre knowledge of it." It is virtually a "shut up" reply: for the seeking after answers to questions like this is pursuing shadows in the wilderness and wasting one's time. This was fourteen hundred years ago nearly. The world has since considerably advanced in its intellectual outlook; but, the mystery of Soul has remained enshrouded as before. Ever since man went out in search of an answer to this question to explore the mystery, he has himself been left mysti-

fied. Casting an honest look into the history of the past achievements of the soul-searching philosophers, we find that there is a colossal amount of literature on the subject; but very little achievement, indeed, in the way of research. In fact, the search has been static, without any gain in thought and material. The definitions have remained the same, as in the days of Aristotle and Plato; or, perhaps in earlier days. In the light of this fact, does the Qur'anic verse quoted above, not make us feel ashamed of our aimless pursuits ? We have not only advanced no further, but our very path on which we had planned an advance has been wrong altogether. I shall presently illustrate my point from another verse of the Holy Qur'an which will amply show how far away we have been from our real point and goal. Says the Holy Qur'an :

> "It is God that takes the Souls (of men) at death. And those that die not (He takes) during their sleep : Those on whom He has passed the decree of death, He keeps back (from returning to life), but the rest He sends (to their bodies) for a term appointed. Verily in this are signs for those who reflect."

Our philosophy and psychology tell us today that all activity and movement in the human body is due to the soul. The body dies if the soul is removed from it, and all activity and movement cease with its exit. They further tell us that both consciousness and behaviour are lost when the soul escapes from the body. Let us now reflect on the verse

quoted above : and certainly therein are great signs for those who will reflect. I have not come across any claim anywhere about anything definite in the subject of the soul. The Qura'nic claim quoted above is unique in this respect and is the only exception. Should we not then, as students, stop a while to examine this claim ? The ways of God are unique, the ways of man inconsistently peculiar. Yet, man in his pride passes by ignoring wise counsel as if endowed with all the knowledge, knowing little that he has acquired from a state of ignorance; and in his short span of life he cannot possibly learn all. Should you then not stop to reflect and learn if you are genuinely seeking knowledge ? Now, let us consider it.

The following is made abundantly clear from this verse; *viz.*, God Almighty takes the soul out of the human body under two conditions : once, permanently, when the man dies, and secondly temporarily, while the man is asleep. Is death then caused every time the soul leaves the body ? No. On the other hand the soul undoubtely leaves the body when death overtakes man. What then is the property of the soul ?

It is further clear from the above verse that the mere exit of the soul from the body does not cause death : but there is something else besides the soul that is required to cause death. And, if the soul is not responsible for causing death, it is certainly not responsible for the cessation of activity; for, activity is perceptible in the beating of the heart during sleep when, according to the above verse, the Soul

leaves the body temporarily. The modern school of Behaviourism seems to evaporate into the void by this cold touch of Qur'anic reasoning; and the theory of Interactionism becomes volatile as well. Let us once again reflect on this problem keeping in view the Qur'anic verse, but from another point of view.

(2)

When the soul leaves the body, it induces into the body a state of some kind of unconsciousness, or, in other words, during the conscious movements of man, the soul is within the body. Therefore the soul is some kind of consciousness. The question now arises that this unconsciousness can be induced artificially in man : as, for instance, by giving him a blow, or by administering anaesthesia, such as chloroform. Can we not then control the soul's exit and entrance in and out of the human body ? Apparently it seems possible. But, then again, the process seems reversable, for, we can without the introduction of artificial means fall asleep and awake at will, thus sending out and bringing the soul into our body. Are we not then completely in control of our souls? From the above discussion, it seems most probable. Yet, another question crops up before us : While we are asleep, the soul is out of the body temporarily, but some one may come and wake us up by shouting or shaking our body, when we wake up and attain consciousness. How does the soul then know that it has to return unexpectedly ? Does it leave a part of itself in the body, which keeps in communication with it, while it is roaming about in the

spiritual world ? It must have some means to return and resume consciousness. In its exit from the body the soul is evidently set free from all restrictions and limitations of time and space. It must travel at tremendous speed to be able to bring back news from the four corners of the world in the twinkling of an eye. How can we collaborate all this ?

I must frankly admit here the limitations of my knowledge, for having raised the questions myself, I am completely ignorant and at a loss to answer them. But without answering these questions which I will leave to better brains than myself, I shall proceed to examine a few more aspects of the problem. Concurrent with these questions arise several other similar problems connected with the nature of the soul, namely, when a state of unconsciousness is artificially introduced by giving a blow, the soul leaves the body; but, in this state of lost consciousness, movement does not cease. Not only the vital organs keep functioning, but the limbs and tissues and the Mind itself keep fairly active. The state of unconsciousness opens the door and releases the subconscious hold to enable it to enter into the field of dreams. The phenomena of dreams simply denotes that the soul is set free from the bodily imprisonment and travels in domains unknown to the waking mind. It is, therefore, clear that the soul does not totally leave the body and has some remnant left behind which keeps in touch with it. But this presumption is incorrect in the light of the Qur'anic verse : for has not God said that he takes the soul out of the body during sleep and death. There is no sense, therefore,

in presuming that it does not exist in toto. This in itself is an amazing phenomena; more amazing indeed than the dreams themselves.

(3)

Our subject is more connected with the prophetic dreams than the ordinary ones, which, according to the Freudian school of thought, occur as a result of waking life impressions and complexes. The subject of prophetic dreams is a baffling one for the philosophers and mystics. The school of Freud has also no explanation for them in their system of symbolic interpretation of dreams. The soul is concerned mainly with the structure of true dreams; because it is the Soul which, during its release from the body, brings news of what is about to happen. Ordinary dreams, which are not true and prophetic, are akin to day-dreaming and may be called wishfulfilment in the terms of Freud, and are interpretable by a psychological analysis. But true dreams are prophetic and need no interpretation. They are true to the very word. On the other hand Freud's interpretation of dreams is materialistic; while that of the prophetic or true dreams is a spiritual phenomena which concerns mainly the soul. Of all the various schools of philosophies, it is only amongst the Muslim philosophers and mystics that we find an effort to explain the phenomena of true dreams. And in this explanation we find them first forming a background to raise up the foundations of an explanation of the world of spirit. Of course, their knowledge cannot be considered as final. As this subject is inti-

mately connected with our subject of soul it would be worthwhile to dwell on it a little more and clear the ground for further discussion.

One of the famous schools of philosophy in the Muslim world is the *Ikhwan-us Safa* (Pure Bretheren). In one of their epistles, it is said, "The images or figures that you see in the material world are akin to those that exist as their counterparts in the world of spirit. These figures are spiritually lighted and are exquisite, while those in this material world are dark and dirty. Just as an ordinary picture has a peculiar relationship with the original living being of whom this picture is really the representation, the same way these living beings are related to their spiritual counterparts which exist in the world of spirit. (In other words everything that exists here in the world of matter has an exactly similar and equal counterpart in the world of spirit). The figures in the spiritual world are the moving figures, *i.e.*, they cause movement in the figures of this world; while the figures in the material world are the moved ones, *i. e.*, those that are being moved. The figures of the spiritual world are immortal while those of the material world are mortal."

Our mystics have further explained that, before anything happens in this material world of ours, it takes shape in exactly the same manner as it is to happen here, in the world of spirit. And likewise, all accidents that are yet to occur have an existence in the world of spirit. It is as if the drama is first rehearsed before its actual enactment ! It is the prior communication of this "pre-happening" in the

spiritual world which is made known or communicated to the human soul during its sojourn after exit from the human body during sleep. The soul has the property of expansion and extension with a view to establish contacts with its original associates or abode. If this be really true, the phenomena of true dreams can be easily explained. But the true knowledge is only with God.

(4)

The Soul or the Spirit is originally the inhabitant of the other world, which is infused into the human body sometimes during the period of gestation. Imam Razi in his famous book Israr-ul-Tanzil opines that the physical "turning" of the baby in the mother's womb, which is perceptible in the fourth month, takes place with the first entry of the soul in the human body. It must be remembered that this is a physiological phenomena, and is the first perceptible movement in the child's body, known in Embryology as the "turning." But this does not exclude the possibilities of a prior movement. The child's tissues are growing and he is gaining in size from the very first day of the conception. His heart beats and arteries throb. The original embryonic layers are differentiated into the various organs. This all is happening before the soul enters the human body and "turning" takes place. The child does not breathe; but the mother breathes for him, and supplies him with the necessary threshhold of oxygen for his maintenance through her own blood which circulates through his tissues, thus helping the infant or the embryo, as the case may be, to adjust

his wear and tear of the tissues. The child is not living in the normal sense of the word, while he is in the mother's womb. He first comes into life after he is born and for the first time breathes his own breath. But a real and perceptible movement in the tissues of organs of the child while in the mother's womb cannot be denied at any stage while he is in the process of development, before being born.

Now, the soul, which has entered the physical world, for the first time, from a different world altogether, is more or less imprisoned in our bodies. It has to adopt itself to new environments and finds it difficult to accommodate itself in a more imperfect system of human habits and ways. It naturally longs reunion with its original home, and feels homesick ! God has, therefore, provided facilities for its release from the human body, during sleep, when it can satisfy its urge to return and seek its food. It must needs provide its food from the world of spirit, just as this physical body of ours is satiated with the food that grows on our land. It is nothing peculiar with the soul; we find this even amongst certain types of human beings. A man from the West finds it difficult at first to adopt our highly spiced Eastern dishes. Why should the soul then not feel so, which is a much finer entity. My late revered teacher, Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi (who has unfortunately been grossly misrepresented and wrongly understood), used to explain this problem by a very interesting example, which would be worth while quoting here. One day, while explaining to me a chapter from the *Sata'at* of Shah Wali Ullah, he said,

"Imagine to yourself a lion in the zoo. You bring for him food which, you think, is appropriate for his sustenance; such as large pieces of mutton or beef. You think that you are feeding him well. But the lion, in the course of time, loses all his characteristics of strength, bravery, and agility. In order to enable him to attain those qualities you must feed him on 'meet on hoof,' that is to say, live animals which he is wont to have in the jungle : and, let him kill those himself. In other words his food must be brought from the place he comes from and not from our markets. But still better would be to leave him in the jungle, where he would recoupe his lost qualities. Therefore," he continued, "the food must come from the place a being belongs to. And, similar is the case with the human soul. Because, the soul feels just as hungry as the human body, its food must be derived from the place it comes from. We cannot satisfy it by the food of our human abode. It is for this reason that the soul naturally longs to return to the world of spirit to enable it to gather its food. A human being, who is born of this world, satisfies his hunger by eating of what grows *in* here. But the soul cannot be fed on anything of the kind. It must receive its nourishment from the spiritual world, or something which we have here that is of heavenly origin." Here the late Maulana used to forcefully impress that a man in his youth seeks after love, music, art and all the fine things to satisfy his sentiments. It is at this stage that the urge of the soul is at its maximum and it longs for a reunion to obtain its food. But the ignorant youth understands it not. He whiles away his time in frivolities, paying no heed to

the call from within. While he can easily satisfy it with prayer, supplication and *Kalam Ullah* the word of God. The word of God has a divine origin and belongs to the world of spirit. It can easily satisfy the soul and quench its thirst. The Mystics who take to spiritual exercises absorb themselves in Zikr excessively and can do away with sleep. The soul rests content within the physical framework of our body and is disciplined to remain therein for long periods. It is a well-known fact that farther the man is away from God, the more sleep he needs and the more he sleeps away his life. This is because the soul is not being attended to properly : it wishes more and more to return to the spiritual world to obtain its nourishment, which it cannot obtain in the negligent man.

It is in this sojourn that the soul meets with the "pre-happenings" in the other world and brings back news of what is to happen. Mystics who are spiritually elevated can obtain this knowledge even in the waking life. This is because their soul is so trained and disciplined that while remaining in the human body it has established contact with its abode and does not require a release to bring back its food and the news. Thus occur the true dreams and prophecies. This, in short, is the explanation of the true dreams. It is not proper to enter into any further explanation of the mysteries of the unseen for two reasons. Firstly, because, the writer is not well-versed in the field of spirit, its techniques and methods; and, secondly, he has a very limited knowledge, a further expression of which may lead to misunderstandings.

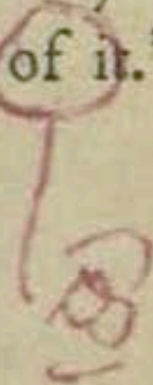
After giving a resume of the nature of human soul, and the spiritual background of worldly happenings, their subsequent reception by the wondering soul and their consequent interpretation; let us once again revert to our original thesis and wind up the discussion.

(5)

We have been discussing about the induced unconsciousness with the help of the anaesthetics and physical shock, which are instrumental in releasing the soul from the human body. Now, this much is clear from the Qur'anic verse, that the soul leaves the body permanently at the time of death and temporarily during sleep. It was further deduced that the exit merely leads to unconsciousness, but not to the cessation of activity. I further put forward the view that this state of unconsciousness can also be voluntary. And now finally connecting all the points enumerated above, we come to the following results :

1. The Soul is of the spiritual world;
2. It seeks reunion with its original abode, from where it derives its nourishment;
3. It is not responsible for life, for it even goes out of the body during sleep;
4. It is not responsible for movement, for the heart still beats and the arteries throb, when the soul goes out during sleep; and before it enters the embryo in the mother's womb;
5. It produces a state of unconsciousness when it

leaves the body and death is only a prolonged sleep or unconsciousness;

6. The state of unconsciousness can be induced artificially and the Soul sent out voluntarily;
7. Death is cessation of activity; and
8. For the cessation of activity something else besides the Soul is required, which is the real cause of death, of which we have no knowledge. It is for this reason that God Almighty said to the Prophet (on whom be peace) to tell the Jews : "Say, the soul is from thy Lord, and ye have been given but meagre knowledge of it."

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DESIRE

(I)

IF ONE ponders the sequence of the origin of Desire, one finds a variety of them springing up at different stages of one's life. Many of them are fulfilled, while quite a number never see the light of the day. And quite a few people are often heard to say that so and so of their desire has been fulfilled, yet there are innumerable disgusted people who never even have a single desire fulfilled. There are some amongst us who even profess that whenever they desire anything it comes to them spontaneously. With this hopeful aspect of fulfilment, there is the pathetic side of the dejected who lay all the blame at the door of their Destiny: and people of this category are abundantly found in all walks of our social structure. Amongst these may be seen educated intellectuals, ignorant rogues, professional pick-pockets, and habitual thieves. Let us devote a few thoughts to this baffling problem of Desire-cum-Destiny, and try to unfathom the secrets which superficially appear to create a conflict between our Destiny and Desire. Is the Law of Destiny (Taqdir) antagonistic to the welfare of humanity? Are the various desires from within our hearts not in accordance with the Laws of Almighty, and do they not spring after due sanctions?

The first thing that strikes our eye is our concept of

Life's Philosophy of action : which, in brief, is to say that a struggle is necessary for the achievement of results : whether this struggle be physical or mental, or both combined. This struggle is a movement in a particular direction; and the movement is the sign of Life. This 'movement in a particular direction' is, really speaking, an order and sequence created in the movement itself, which is capable of producing results. This organised movement, then, is the struggle, which is inextricably bound up with knowledge. In fact, it is knowledge which organises movement to produce a struggle. At the same time it cannot be denied that movement can be produced without having knowledge; but this movement, it will be agreed, is a haphazard one and is devoid of sequence and order, and will not bear any fruit. It is practically clear now that this organisation in movement is the result of knowledge. We shall, therefore, in this short paper call this organised movement as Action.

(2)

In Islam, the Holy Qur'an is considered the source of all knowledge. It is therefore, this knowledge from which springs the supreme Action called Islam. In other words the Qur'an being Knowledge, Islam is Action. This is the first truth which confronts us in our present search of the problem. It is worthwhile remembering that knowledge has no length or breadth : its only dimension is Depth. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace), in spite of the fact that he was an *Ummi* (illiterate), possessed great depths of knowledge, and it is on

account of this dimension of knowledge which, when added to our movements, produces utilitarian effects which have creative values. Hence destruction is completely ruled out from its results. This is the only difference between the acts of a human being and an animal : and hence why, man is called a Rational Animal. With this thesis clear in our minds, we now perceive that with the increase of knowledge there is a proportionate increase in the outflow of our desires. Such desires may be spiritual or material. Some long for worldly achievements, while others labour for spiritual elevation. Let us now enter into the physiology of these Urges, and see what is their fate and how they spring up from within our hearts.

We have used the word Urges here for Desires. A desire is necessarily an urge in the modern sense of the word; and various desires are tantamount to the different urges in man. Our urge or desire, therefore, represents only a part of man, and not the whole man. All these desires or urges, when they reach the higher strata of selfhood, merge into one desire or urge, which becomes the final urge, appropriately called the Ideology. An ideology must, therefore, necessarily contain within itself the essence of all the urges. In this sense only the true Ideology becomes a Religion otherwise, it will merely represent one urge which is not representative of the whole man, at all. The modern ideologies of Karl Marx, Freud, and Adler seek to represent only one urge in man, *viz* : hunger, sex and power, respectively; they fall short of the definition of religion. Religion seeks

to express a combination of urges or desires which are an expression of the whole man, while the present-day indeologies which are not the total representatives of man are only *isms* of a deranged mind. Iqbal is his *lectures*, says, "Religion is not a departmental affair; it is neither mere thought, nor mere feeling, nor mere action; it is an expression of the whole man." In higher religion, all the urges converge into one desire, and that is to seek a union with the Ultimate Ego, which is the final realisation of man and his ideal. Therefore a true ideology is one which has as its goal the final absorption of personality in the Utimate Ego. All desires become modified into this final desire by a process of gradual fulfilment. Ancillary urges evaporate into the void as something redundant and unwanted.

Some desires have a short life and quickly fade out, while others persist on for some time; and yet, quite a few reach their goal of fulfilment. And those that are fulfilled are not extinguished altogether after the end is achieved, but their quality changes and they become modified for achieving other results. These 'other results' are allied and related to the original desire which had its abode somewhere in the unconscious of man ! At the same time the purposefulness of these desires depends not only upon the inclinations of our temperament, but also upon early impressions impinged upon the unconsicious through our environmental influences, and the other psychological stages through which we may have passed. A man can only desire according to the way of life in which he has been brought up, and his

experiences count for the quality of the desires he cherishes. A man, therefore, cannot desire outside the pale of his early enviromental experiences. And this desire when it springs gushes forth with a certain amount of intensity. This intensity in some is great, and in others it is low. This again is dependent upon how much a thing is desired; and whether the desire is a genuine or a false one. It is important here to point out that it is only those desires which are forceful that ever achieve any results. Weak desires never see the light of the day. Therefore, for those who meet with disappointments, and whose desires remain unfulfilled, it is essential to weigh the genuineness of their desires. If such desires lack force and intensity, then it is well to give them up.

The other aspect of desire which needs a thorough scrutinisation is to see what relationship the desire has with the personality and profession of man—for, this would reveal whether a desire is genuine or false. Is the desire according to the way of life that man leads, or is he extending his hand beyond the sphere of his experiences and activities? *Nafas na anjuman-i-arzu se bahar khench* ! To make this aspect more clear, it is sufficient to point out that it is easier for a barber or a butcher to become a surgeon, rather than his achieving a ministerial appointment ! There is a subtle contradiction in the purpose of the two cherished professions; and although, from a psychological point of view, there seems a discord between the two, it is not beyond the grasp of the urge to experience fulfilment. But the self will have to pass through a more difficult process to attain its object,

than it would have to if there was no maladjustment. The individual, then, who desires something outside his professional built will experience difficulty in attaining his desire, and which, if persisted in while it remains unfulfilled, may result in mental dissociation. On the other hand if such desires were to be fulfilled, the individual will find himself a misfit in his newly-established environments.

(3)

In amplification of the preceding paragraph, it may further be added that the desire must have a logical basis, and should be weighed honestly so that a false estimation of one's capabilities may not hamper its progress towards the goal. It is of the utmost importance that one forms a true estimate of one's self; because overestimation often is the main cause of disappointments. It is not proper, nor even reasonable, to desire for something which is completely outside one's reach, and one does not possess the means to get anywhere near it.

As a desire is fulfilled, it does not end there : but, as we have explained above its character is modified to give shape to a new desire, which is directly linked with the original desire. This process goes on till the final idea which is sprung from the seed of the original desire is attained. With every change in life, the desire moulds itself according to the new position it finds itself in, sharing and dispensing new responsibilities.

Before we proceed further, let us sum up what we have already said. Our pursuit of the problem so far boils down to three principles : *viz.*, in order that a desire can be fulfilled, it is necessary that it be forceful; secondly, it must conform to the personality and position of the aspirant ; and, lastly, it must have a logical basis with honest estimates of one's capabilities. If these three essentials are present, then the desire will see its way to fulfilment. There is nothing to stop it. Let us now get down to the actual process by which the desire works itself out. Let us fathom its secrets. A deeper study of the problem reveals to us two avenues of thought; firstly, when the original desire takes root in the unconscious, it gradually works its way towards the fulfilment unobserved. Secondly, a desire which does not necessitate or demand an urgent fulfilment is being repeated in the mind. In other words the individual keeps himself reminded of the urge, and does not let it die out; thus strengthening his impressions on the unconscious. In short, the individual is gradually struggling unconsciously or consciously towards its goal, but with lesser speed. In some cases the demand is urgent and the individual is greatly pained to achieve quick results. It is here that the struggle meets with spiritual help and the individual resorts to prayers and supplications. Let us see how this works. In fact, the more protracted and obstructed the desire, the more subtle the supplication. The more honest and genuine the desire, the more forceful and intense it is. The man's attention is diverted towards the Almighty and the continous thought and intensity of the desire which is building up compels the urge to

look askance for help from the Almighty in the attainment of the goal. This is what is called prayer. In the words of Iqbal, "Prayer as a means of spiritual illumination is a normal vital act by which the little island of our personality suddenly discovers its situation in a larger whole of life Prayer must be regarded as a necessary complement to the intellectual activity of the observer nature." This spiritual illumination is, in fact, a means of spiritual elevation consequently resulting from an appropriate aspiration. And this Complement is the necessary outcome of a result based on a true estimate of the creative powers of Nature in man, and outside in his environments. Prayer actually, is not a mere observatory act : it is an appreciation sprung after observation which produces a unique realisation in man, and compels him to submit to his Creator

"Prayer then.... is an expression of man's inner yearning for a response in the awful silence of the universe" further clarifies our point. It must be pointed out here that this "inner yearning' is the urge or desire as we have called it and this 'awful silence' is the awe-inspiring environment, in which one breathes when he is about to be disappointed, and looks askance towards the Almighty for the fulfilment of his desire, in total admiration of His Graciousness. The simple repetition and recitation of God's names and His Attributes is not prayer nor is the change of postures a prayer, as most people seem to think : it is prayer when an urge bulges out of the heart with the expanding self. It is prayer when the heart is compelled

to open itself out to the Almighty, fully conscious of the powers of the Creator. It is at such a time that the prayers and supplications are accepted ; and arrangements are made for their fulfilment. Has God Almighty Himself not drawn our attention to this in several places in the Holy Qur'an ? Does He not say that you do not ask for favours from Him ? Ask and it shall be given unto you ; as He said on many an occasion. It is this asking under the stress of the desire which when looked to God for attainment that it is fulfilled. At such an occasion we tune ourselves with His wishes; and lo ! suddenly sweet music begins to pour forth announcing our prayers have been accepted, and the desire is fulfilled. It is not a very difficult process to understand. Just as if you were to tune in a station on your wireless set by moving the wave band; similarly the waves of desire, when they pour forth from the heart with increasing intensity, become in tune with the higher stations in the spiritual sphere, till one communicates with the Almighty God, and knocks at His door asking for refuge and help for the attainment of the desire. And in an instant it is granted.

This is possible for all human beings, without distinction of caste and creed. But the difference between the desire of a Muslim and a non-Muslim is that simultaneously with the springing up of the desire in the heart of the Muslim, his thoughts are diverted towards his Creator, and he adjusts his actions in accordance with the Divine dictates, so that he may seek His pleasure. He tries his best that his desires be legitimate and not deceptive. This done, God listens to

his supplications and accepts to grant him the desire.

This philosophy is entirely in agreement with the Laws of Destiny :[1] in fact, this is *Taqdir*. And a person who maintains that he is born under an unlucky star must revise his ideas in the light of what we have said above, and make a correct appreciation of his capabilities.

Sometimes, it has been seen that certain desires which are not legitimate are even fulfilled by Divine Grace. There is a lesson in them. It is the very proof of God's Graciousness. God Almighty does not dishearten His creatures; and by the mere act of asking they are granted when they are sometimes not entitled to. But, when such desires are granted, man looses his peace of mind. He attains to what he had desired; but having attained this he still finds he has no consolation or peace of mind. The reason is that God Almighty does not like to disappoint him; at the same time He likes to teach him a lesson that what he has attained he was actually not deserving. This brings us to the conclusion: Man must guard against false desires, for, if he puts forth an urge, it is bound to be fulfilled if he looks askance towards God : but once fulfilled, if it is unjustifiable he will find himself a misfit in his new environment, and incapable of carrying on in his newly-bestowed position.

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1. The Quranic view of Destiny (*Taqdir*) which is entirely biological, contradicts Nietsche's fatalism of *Qismat*; which doctrine, in the opinion of Iqbal, totally destroys the nation-tendencies and relaxes the tension of the ego and does not stir up the human organism for the fight of life. This struggle, therefore, is entirely biological; although Iqbal considers it to be partly ethical too.

ISLAM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON WORLD RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

(1)

"RELIGION must be reborn," says Sir Radhakrishnan in *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*. "A reborn living faith in spiritual values is the deepest need of our lives. Only religion which demands as its first principle individual change, the substitution of the Divine for the dark images in in the soul, can create that new heart in the people, can give them a courage and the faith to be consistent and change their life and institutions which are so barbarous in a thousand details which loyalty to their religion demands."

Religion, as envisaged by the learned scholar of Hindu philosophy, was reborn in Islam nearly fourteen centuries ago; the religion which in the above quotation visualises to bring with it some fundamental change in the spiritual aspects of society. Muhammad (peace be upon him) smote the idols of Ka'ba and substituted the Divine faith in their place. He completely changed the outlook of the people; his words flashed round the world in the twinkling of an eye. Mahmud of Ghazna broke open the gates of Som Nath and smote the valuable deities to supplant the Divine in place of the *Dark Images*. He meant to bring about a complete change in the Hindu society which had adopted religious seclusion. The old spark of the Upnishads had

flickered away. Mahmud of Ghazna was condemned in history for this substitution. The Hindu sage upholds him again unconsciously for his righteous act. But why this restoration of the Som Nath again? We shall come to this psychological implication of the post-Partition complex, which has developed in the Hindu mind, later on in this paper.

(2)

Islam gave a vital impetus, an "Elan Vital" as it were, to the various religions it came into contact with. If we look at the various progressive movements and reforms in Hinduism and Christianity since the last one century or more, we find that the followers of these two world religions are gradually detaching themselves from the old practices and coming to a right understanding of the true religion, to which Islam pointed from the very first day of its revelation. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara are all in one AUM now! AUM is the One Supreme Creator for them, in Whom all attributes of the Ultimate Ego are confined. The nature of Jesus Christ is being doubted, and the theory of the Son has been refuted. Anthansius, the orthodox bishop of Alexandria, must have shivered in his grave at these changing times, for he propounded the Trinity! And Aurius, the Alexandrian Presbyterian of the early fourth century, who fought hard for the doctrine of Unity as against the doctrine of Trinity, must feel jubilant over his success! The educated Christians today find it hard to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of an Omnipotent and Omniscient God. Surely, Islam has infused into them

again the spirit of right thinking. It has, in fact, reorientated their religious outlook which was so unbiblical and heathen-like. Is religion, then, not reborn in Islam once again? Islam has brought home to the people the lost teachings of the Upnishads and the Bible. After centuries of religious slumber, the Qur'an struck a note of warning that the religions which were all from the same God had been adultrated, and they must revert to the belief and faith in One God, towards which the Qur'an most emphatically pointed from the very first day of its appearance. Without this belief and faith a peaceful harmony in society was not possible. Let us for a moment see as to what the original teachings of the Upnishads and the Gita were. We shall then be able to form an idea as to what was being practiced at the time of the advent of Islam in India, and how Muslim thought brought about this change in the Hindu outlook as expressed by Sir Radhakrishna in the twentieth century.

"The Upnishads require us to adopt an attitude of utter silence in regard to the nature of the Absolute Spirit," says Sir Radhakrishna again. Surely, this existed in the Upnishads since time immemorial but had been forgotten, till the Holy Qur'an unequivocally declared : "Say, the Soul is from the Lord"; and put an end to the inquisitiveness of the ignorant. The Holy Qur'an has maintained that it has brought nothing new in the way of Faith; it merely stands to revive the original Faith of One God which was taught to every people.

We further find that the Upnishads did ascribe such

qualities as Oneness, Wisdom, and Perfection to the object of their worship. "He is One," say the Upnishads, "above all distinction of colour Who dispenses through His various powers the hidden needs of men of various colours, Who knows all the things from the beginning to the end; may He unite us with the sacred wisdom." The Holy Qur'an has proved the truth of its declarations, by making the followers of different religions search for similar teachings in their own scriptures. Expressions like the above have indeed been discovered, which are quite in tune with the Holy Qur'an.

(3)

Bible was not copied from the Summerian documents as deciphered from the cuniform inscriptions, nor was Zoroastrianism a later voice of the Aryan religion, nor ever the Qur'an borrowed from the Hebrew religions, as is thought by some ignorant people. Every people received its communication from God Almighty through its own messengers. It was the same religion all over the world. But, the facts had disappeared from amongst the scriptures till Islam pointed it out. Then in a rush did everyone on the quiet start searching for the truth once again. The results are evident. The belief in One God Almighty is coming back. Islam has certainly substituted the Divine for the *Dark Image* in the souls of men.

"The symbol AUM, including the three sounds A, U, and M, represent the Supreme with its three gross, subtle and casual aspects......as the Upnishads say, 'All that is

past, present and future is verily AUM,' that which is beyond these three modes of time is also AUM." The Holy Qur'an has brought to light another truth from the Upnishads in support of it !

The very foundations of the Hindu religion were shaken when the three symbols were analysed, and the attributes of the One Almighty were split, that is to say, the Supreme Spirit AUM which was at once the Creator, the Destroyer, and the Sustainer, came to be regarded as three different beings each having one attribute as the controlling force. Brahma became the Creator, Vishnu the Sustainer and Maheshwara the Destroyer ! This was the stage at which Islam found the Hindu religion during its first contacts in India.

If we study the modern interpretations of the Gita or any other Hindu religious book, we find that a considerable material has been taken from the Holy Qur'an to explain away the various injunctions, which have been readjusted as the Qur'an pointed out. As an example, the theory of Karama Yoga may be taken. We perceive in the Yoga of Krishna and the Dhanus of Arjana, two movements which are emerging into one, *viz.*, Contemplation and Action. Those of us, who have studied the modern interpretation of Gita by B. G. Tilak called *Gita Rhasya*, will realise the stress laid on righteous actions, and contemplations. The one is intensely passive and serves others while the other is busy with the struggle of existence. One can perceive the Qur'anic conception of *Jihad* throughout this interpretation, on which the learned author has devoted over two hundred

pages, to explain the theory of Karama Yoga. *Jihad* is nothing but a struggle for existence for the living being, both for the spiritual and the material welfare. The very word is saturated with the idea of action. It is pregnant with vitality so subtle, yet so undeniable and forceful. This action, too, is either passive or active, as has been explained in the Qur'an and the Traditions. *Jihad* in Islam was looked down upon as something primitive and barbarian, just a decade ago, and was grossly misrepresented. It has now been realised that apparently the whole life is *Jihad*. Hence its adoption by Darwin also ! The importance of the struggle for existence in Evolution had been discussed by Muslim scholars, much before the time of Darwin. The broad outlines of Darwin's theory of Evolution can even be seen in the famous *Mathnavi* of Maulana Rum. Let us now look at some other aspects of the world religious reforms.

Amongst the Christians, the Baptists, the Puritanical Fundamentalists, and the Seventh Day Adventists, are fast reviving the original teachings of the Bible. They seem to be purging the Holy Script to wash away the unconfirmed portions. The Ten Commandments are coming more into light today than they actually did a decade ago. The Pork and the Wine are now considered as having been prohibited by the Scriptures. Idol worship is going out of vogue. Here again the *Dark Images* are being replaced by the Divine concepts.

The Zoroastrians are lamenting that a great portion of

their religious literature has disappeared. And whatever is available to them from the Zend-Avesta, Ahura Mazda is being interpretted as the only One Almighty God.

(4)

Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore was a great admirer of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who is the founder of Brahmu Samaj. His fundamental reforms established for the first time in India, one place for the worship of all men without any distinction of caste and creed. The late Mr. Gandhi was also greatly affected by him, and was seen to hold his congregational prayers in the open. The very idea of congregational prayers is Islamic ! Further, the holding of such prayers in the open is again an Islamic practice. In the open, one has the bounties of nature in abundance. Man is thus inwardly urged to realise God Whose creation in the open he witnesses. And if the prayers are held in the open in the early hours of the morning or just after sunset, the awe-inspiring environments drive home the belief in One Supreme Creator more quickly. The late Mr. Gandhi may not have admitted it today but he was decidedly influenced by the Islamic religion. Another important factor in saying prayers in the open is, that it is not practicable to remove the huge and gigantic images into the open. You thus shun them away. Thus the only image before one saying his prayer in the open is that of God Almighty. The late Mr. Gandhi was also frequently heard to say, "I am a God-fearing man." Surely, one cannot be frightened of God unless he is conscious of the fact that there is only One in Whom all the powers lie.

Writing in *The Harijan* some years ago, he said, "I believe in the Bible as I believe in the Gita. I regard all the great faiths of the world as equally true with my own." We can safely assume that the sage was tremendously affected by the sublime teachings of the Holy Qur'an, even though he may not have admitted it. For, where else lie such teachings? It is a well-known fact that for a Muslim it is incumbent upon him to believe in all the prophets of God; and furthermore, that every people had received their messengers through whom the word of God had been revealed to them. Islam differed only in one respect, and that is that the true religion had been tempered with, and was now only to be found in the Holy Qur'an, for whose security God Almighty had vouchsafed. The text of the Holy Qur'an stands as a testimony, since the last fourteen centuries, to this pronouncement, which is unique in so far as no other book in the world has ever declared it.

People of various religions have had to adjust their religious beliefs in accordance with the dictates of the Holy Qur'an, and the scales provided by Islam; whether willingly or unconsciously. Such are the doctrines of the natural religion of Man. Islam is bringing home to the people the Intuitive Belief in One God. The world today is aiming towards one religion and one nation or race, to combat the evils of this discordant world. Belief in One God is the only way to achieve this end. Without this natural belief, Man cannot fit into the Natural Environments. Islam is the religion of Reason and Moderation. Reason, because,

it has laid down laws regulating life, thus demanding a sequence and order in things. This is only practicable when you bow down to a Supreme Being, and not to so many. It is the religion of Reason because everyone has started to accept its fundamental principles. And, it is the religion of Moderation, because it maintains a utilitarian level after regulating life. The facts which Islam enunciated fourteen centuries ago are now being studied thoughtfully by the followers of other religions. It has enabled the other world religions to overhaul and reinterpret their beliefs in the light of what Islam presents to them.

(5)

In the history of religious thought, religion probably was originally conceived by the Aryans in the form of a philosophy. It could not have been the revealed presentation, for, it shows lack of proper adjustment in life, and bears only an ideology for the intellectual few. Whatever is available to us today, one can safely conclude from this, the spark of Unity or qualified Monism is percolating throughout this philosophy. It is further clear that the earliest written religion today is that of the Hindus. After them came the religions of Abraham, Zoroaster, Moses, and Jesus Christ (peace be on them all) till Islam finally put an end to the process of revelation. Islam absorbed within itself all the fundamental principles that were necessary for the continuation and well-being of humanity. The human mind had reached its climax of intellectual development, and the completest form of religion was conceived in Islam.

The retainers of the Aryan religion today are the Hindus. Let us now see what this religion looked like at the time of Muslim advent a thousand years ago into this subcontinent; and whether what has been quoted above from the Upnishads and the Gita was ever pointed out before by any other school of thought or not.

Mahmud of Ghazna, while smiting the idols on one side, was establishing cultural relations with India on the other. He was accompanied by a train of scholars, poets and scientists, who studied the Indian religion, its arts and sciences. They have left us some very valuable works of superb scholarship and research. Let us see what al-Beruni has to say. It is worth remembering here that al-Beruni is the only versatile scholar the world has ever produced who wrote in six languages (Sachau). But for him the ancient Hindu religion, arts and sciences would have been unknown to us.

In his History of India (*Kitab al-Hind*) he quotes profusely from the Hindu scriptures, a study of which he had made deeply. It is further to be remembered that his aim in studying the Hindu literature and philosophy was to search out the truth, and we find him invariably quoting passages that suit our subject today. We will start with a few passages from the famous book *Patanjali* which al-Beruni quotes :

> " The pupil asks, Who is the worshipped one, by the worship of whom blessing is obtained ?" The master says, 'It is He Who being eternal and

unique does not for His part stand in need of any human action for which He might give us a recompense either a blissful repose which is hoped and longed for, or a troubled existence which is feared and dreaded. He is unattainable to thought, being sublime beyond all unlikeness which is abhorrent and all likeness which is sympathetic. He from His essence knows from all eternity. Knowledge in the human sense of the term has as its object that which was unknown before, whilst not knowing does not at any time or in any condition apply to God.'

"The pupil asks, 'If He speaks because He knows, what then is the difference between Him and the knowing sages who have spoken of their knowledge?' The master replies, 'The difference between them is time, for they have learnt in time after having been not knowing and not speaking. By their speech they have transferred their knowledge to others; therefore, their speaking and acquiring of knowledge takes place in time, and as Divine matters have no connection with time, God is knowing and speaking from eternity.'"

There is a striking similiarity between what Sir Radhakrishna says, and what al-Beruni pointed out from the Hindu scriptures a thousand years ago. In the Gita itself we find expressions like the above, which clearly indicate towards

a qualified Monism in the Hindu religion. Al-Beruni has again quoted a number of passages from the Gita, which will illustrate our point further. Says the Gita, "Above them is One Who did not give birth nor was born." This is exactly the same as is given in the *Surah Ikhlas* of the Holy Qur'an, He begets not nor is He begotten. Is it not the teaching of a revealed religion from God Almighty, and towards which the Holy Qur'an pointed out ? "The essence of Whose Being has not been comprehended by the knowledge of anyone, while His knowledge comprehends everyone," is the continuation of the verse quoted above, and is a portion of the discourse, by Vasu Deva to Arjana. Some ignorant people have thrown aspersions on the knowledge of al-Beruni, and say that whatever he has quoted is a fabrication and does not exist anywhere in the Hindu scriptures ! While we are on this, it will be worth the while to dwell a little on this and remove a great misunderstanding about this versatile scholar.

(6)

Dr. Sachau, the translator of al-Beruni's *India*, and who is a famous Orientalist, has brought up certain charges against the intellectual honesty of al-Beruni, in the annotations to his translation. Dr. Sachau remarks, "The quotations given by al-Beruni cannot have been translated from the Bhagvad Gita in its present form. . . . Al-Beruni seems to have used an edition of Bhagvad Gita totally different from the one which we know, and which also in India seems to be the only one known." It is tantamount to saying that they are a fabrication !

It is both amazing and surprising to see a scholar of the calibre of Dr. Sachau totally ignorant of the fact that besides the Bhagvad Gita, at least another one dozen Gitas existed in India at the time of al-Beruni. And, then, does al-Beruni ever mention the fact that he took these quotations from the Bhagvad Gita ? If he does not, we have no reason to assume that they have been taken from the Bhagvad Gita. Al-Beruni simply says GITA, wherever he gives a quotation. Here is a list of the various Gitas that existed at the time of al-Beruni, which have now been lost. This list is taken from *Gita Rhasya* by the late B. G. Tilak, the famous Gita scholar of this century.

(1) Kapila Gita; (2) Dai Gita; (3) Ram Gita; (4) Yam Gita; (5) Surya Gita; (6) Ganesh Gita; (7) Pandva Gita; (8) Siva Gita; (9) Gita Dhyana; (10) Gita Mahaimya; and (11) Bhagvad Gita.

It is like the various versions of the Holy Bible as existed sometime ago, and a few that exist today. As for instance the Vetican Library MS and the Russian MS. Were they made public today, the truth would be revealed undoubtedly; and the facts would be laid bare as to which of them carries the real teachings of Christ and which one is the tempered versions. Will the Christians take the challenge and disapprove what the Holy Qur'an has prophesied by publishing the Vetican MS ? After all what is the reason of making a secret of it when according to the Holy Qur'an this mystery will explode of its own in the course of time.

This ought to serve as an eye-opener to those who disbelieve in the statements of al-Bernui. The late Mr. Tilak, who is considered an authority on the Gita in the modern Hindu world, writing in his famous commentry, *Gita Rhasya*, says, "All these works must have been written after Bhagvad Gita had come into prominence and acquired general acceptance. Nay, one may even go further and say that these various Gitas have been brought into existence with the idea that the sacred literature of a particular sect or a Purana does not become complete unless it contains a Gita similar to the Bhagvad Gita." This at least establishes the fact that there did exist other Gitas, and the quotations by al-Beruni are not concoctions by any means.

Perhaps, Dr. Sachau intended to prove that the description of Monism did not exist in the Gita, as pointed out by al-Beruni, and wanted to uphold the Hindu Trinity in support of his personal convictions, being a Christian. But, Mr. Tilak further says, "If we consider the Surya Gita we find in it a reference (3 : 30) to qualified Monism, (VISISTA-VAITA)." It must not be set aside that the conception of Trinity did not exist in the time of al-Beruni. It certainly did exist. What al-Beruni did was to point out to the Hindus, in the light of his knowledge derived from the Holy Qur'an, that they had gone off the track of true religion. Beyond this he did hot mean to say anything else, and he has correctly recalled to them some beautiful passages from Patanjali and Gita of qualified Monism to make them shake off the belief in a Trinity which was in vogue. The first

blow, then, that was dealt on the mystery of the Hindu Trinity was from the hands of al-Beruni, in the time of Mahmud of Ghazna. It must surely have had its effect; for, thereafter we find reform movements in the Hindu religion set afloat. Sikhism was a similar later movement which took shape in the form of a reaction to reform the Hindu religion on the lines suggested by the Muslim conception of Tawhid.

(7)

That the original Hindu religious belief was a qualified Monism can also be shown from the statement of another Hindu schoolar of today. In a learned article published in *The Islamic Culture* of Hyderabad in 1945, entitled *Dara Shakoh and the Upnishads*, Dr. Tara Chand says, "Now both Hindu and Muslim philosophers agree in regarding Reality as one without a second (Ekamevad-itiyam; Wahedahu la Sharik) and the philosophy is known as Advaita, Tawhid."

It will thus be seen that the Hindu Trinity has been fast disappearing under the influence of Muslim Tawhid; till recently when we perceive a retrogressive change in the Hindu attitude, after the partition of India. The Hindus had really started unearthing their original teachings on the footsteps suggested by Islam. Islam showed them the way. It pointed out to them that the truth was hidden from them. In one of his essays on Hinduism, published in the *Legacy of India*, Sir Radhakrishna says, "For Hinduism though God is formless, He yet informs and sustains countless forms.... all forms are directing their steps towards the One God

though along different paths." "From Him we are and to Him we shall return" is a well-known verse of the Holy Qur'an and does not need any introduction. It was in like manner that the truth in the Holy Qur'an was being searched for in similar verses in the Hindu scriptures.

Having discussed at some length the influence of Islam on Hindu thought, we now return to the psychological implications towards which we pointed at the end of the second paragraph of this paper. Our contention was that the Hindu mind was retracing its footsteps in the field of religious reform, and had begun to supplant the *Dark Images* once again in place of the Divine, which took Islam a long span of one thousand years to revive in the Hindu mind. We will now endeavour to analyse the psychological implications.

(8)

Hindu India is divided today into several camps or groups, as we might call them. At the centre, the people at the helm are still the same veteran nationalists, who may well be taken as the intellectuals of India. In them we find little change in so far as the intellectual outlook is concerned. When certain portions of the Indian Constitution were being discussed in the Indian Parliament, it was unanimously agreed, that for the Oath of Affirmation the expression, "In the name of God," be prefixed. This was a further step towards the growing consciousness of the Hindu mind to a voluntary acceptance of the first principle of Islam; namely, the belief in One God. There is no other book in the world

which starts with that expression except the Holy Qur'an which opens with *Bismillah*—In the name of God ! Surely, the Holy Qur'an has gone to effect the Indian Constitution. So far so good. But, what about the other camps of Hindu intelligenstia ? In the other camps the Hindu Mahasabha ideology prevails the Hindu mind. The Communists can be brushed aside, for they are indifferent to religion altogether. The Mahasabha ideology is giving vent daily to a peculiar mentality, which is striking at the very roots of a religious revival. There is a visible mental protest against everything that has Islamic association in India today. The Urdu language has been divorced from its daily usage; the dress has been discarded. The very manners and customs which were the result of a thousand years of fusion are being banished. The 'complex' produced by the partition of India in the Hindu mind is discernable in the intermittent expressions of similar transferances of emotion, directed against everything that has an Islamic relationship. They have changed the names of places and provinces. They are substituting the *Dark Images* for the Divine once again. Already several mosques have been converted into abodes of idol worship. This change is going on at a very rapid pace, and means to do away with all the impressions that Islam may have left on the Hindu mind. Is it a change for the better, or is it going to lead the country towards disaster ? It is probably none of our business, as some will say. Let India look after itself. Quite true. But being Musalmans, we feel, we have to point out to the Hindu world what *AD VAITA* produced into them, and how it raised them to

the level in which they find themselves today, after a thousand years of slavery. The Hindu intelligentsia has to ask this question seriously from its members.

Tracing back the history of the intellectual revival of the Hindus, the following facts come to our notice. At the time of the Muslim invasion of India, the Hindu masses had fallen on evil days. This was due to their laxity in understanding the true sense of their religion in which a considerable amount of adulteration had crept in. With the coming of the Muslims a gradual revival took place which once more infused into them the faith and belief in One God. With this grew up self-consciousness and national consciousness. It improved their social status in every walk of life. It produced in them courage : for, courage can only come with faith. With the present policy of doing away with everything that is Islamic, it is apprehended, the Hindu may not turn towards discarding this belief in One God Almighty which Islam has infused into them, and which was responsible for this growing consciousness in them. It will certainly once more lower their status, turning them into outcastes and barbarians. They will always stand to lose by this attitude. At the moment the 'complex' is quite transparent. There are possibilities of its becoming 'fixed.' It may volatalise into a sublimation, thus leading to complete disintegration of the Hindu society, as it did over a thousand years ago.

THE NEW INTERPRETATION

(1)

THERE is a paramount need being felt in the Muslim countries today towards a reorientation of the Islamic outlook. A great difficulty is experienced in bringing about this vital change; and the obstructionist tendencies are hampering this advance in certain quarters of the Muslim world. Let us analyse the possibilities of solving this problem; firstly, with a view to fathom the causes of innovatory intrusions, so foreign to the spirit of Islam; and secondly, to explore the avenues of this attack which has resulted in super-impositions and mal-orientation; and lastly, to suggest ways and means to rid ourselves of these accretions, which have unnecessarily interfered in our religious problems, thus resulting in the dissipation of the entire Muslim nation. The main problem that confronts us today is, how to fit ourselves in the present-day world, which has culturally advanced to a very great extent.

(2)

Islam is the natural religion of man. Islam as a religion is the expression of the whole man. We cannot therefore neglect any of his urges, which must be allowed full expression, so as to enable him to develop his faculties as a normal man. Suppression of any one urge always leads to grave

psychological complications. Islam aims to guide and supervise these urges into normal channels, and in moderate ways, thus regulating and controlling the desires in him, on whom rests the onerous duty of being God's vicegerent on earth. Man's responsibility as such is, therefore, great, and the trust placed by God in him is indeed enormous. Can we then completely trample over some of his urges and prevent his development as a normal man ? No. Because, if we try and do this, he grows into an abnormal personality, and is not able to perform his duties to the fullest extent expected of him.

(3)

When we talk of such a thing as the *cultural renaissance*, we usually mean it in a general sense, and not confined to any particular country or class of people. Our main mistake has been to confine the Muslim culture in the water-tight compartment of the Muslim world. Culture and intellect are no one's personal property : they are something very vast and wide which evolve as a result of clash between countries and peoples. No nation single handed has ever evolved a culture, and no single people ever contribute to the culture of their country. The best part of our modern culture has evolved during the Crusades; which was a clash between the Christian world and the world of Islam. "Modern culture is a synthesis of a continuous intellectual eneadvour of generations and generations of people that lived on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea and its vicinity, including Persia and India in the east, England in the west

and Germanic nations in the north. Cultural achievement of the Greeks were assumed by the Muslims, improved, widened, enriched by new discoveries and so transmitted to Europe, which continued from where Muslims stopped." And, "Science could make little progress until Greek reasoning, Arab learning, and European experimental testing of facts united into a scientific method." These quotations will suffice to show that the present-day Western culture is no more European than it is Muslim.

Today, we find that Muslims of the Middle East have accepted the Western culture, while we in Pakistan and India are still undecided about its acceptance and are engaged in hot controversies regarding its adoption. We wish today to analyse the reason of this attitude; and, without entering into its merits and demerits, let us see what apprehensions, taboos and reservations lie in the unconscious of the people of these lands.

(4)

The Muslims of the Middle East gave the present culture to the West, and are fully conscious of the fact that they are merely taking back what they had given. They feel an equal partnership in this heritage. In the subcontinent of India and Pakistan, what have the Hindu and the Muslim contributions to count upon towards the synthesis of the present-day Western culture? The Hindu contribution, if any, is pre-Muslim, through the Iranians and the Greeks, a very long time ago. And after the coming of the Muslims

in India neither have they contributed anything towards it. The main contribution of the Muslims was through their intellectual centres in Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, Granada and Cordova. The Muslims during their reign in India were making use of their achievements, rather than contributing anything. Whatever little the Muslims of India did, remained confined to the Indian limits, and mainly concerned itself in evolving and synthesising a new Indo-Muslim culture, which stopped short of any further progress after their empire terminated. This effort did not affect the Graeco-Arab or the Graeco-Muslim culture which was evolving as a great uniting force to appear later on the Continent, as the modern Western culture. The reason for this is that there was no outstanding scientific or intellectual achievement so as to influence the people on the other side. It is true indeed that the Muslims in India established great dynasties and ruled very efficiently to maintain their empire. This in itself was a great task to maintain. There was no scientific achievement during this whole period; whatever little has come down to us is mainly in the way of art, which confined itself mainly to architecture, poetry, music and literature ! The original sources of history of the Muslim period in India are replete with pastimes and poetry. Stories regarding the Sufis are rampant in the annals of Indian history, and architecture seems to have been their main diversion. And above all, wars, which of course had to be carried on to establish peace in the country. Conditions for many centuries were unsettled, and scientific laboratories could not be established; although we do hear the establishment

of observatories, which did not carry them very far.

The cultural development of Europe is admittedly indebted to the scientific and intellectual achievements of the Muslims of the Middle East and Spain. The Muslims outside India were, therefore, in closer contact with the West in matters of give-and-take, where culture was concerned.

(5)

With the Muslim conquerors from across the frontiers of India had come mystics to preach and proselytise. Their preaching was perhaps by the force of their *Karamat*, and the simple way of life which they led and by their social service; as we learn from the various Tazkiras. Next in their train to come were the poets and musicians, and some historians to record and glorify their achievements ! Except for the solitary figure of al-Beruni, who really did contribute something solid and substantial, we find the whole field barren of genuine intellect. And even he was not a product of India ! The most important figures we find amongst the Muslims of India from the earliest times are some Sufis of note, as for instance al-Hujweri and Nizam-ud-Din; scholars like Amir Khusro, Mulla Mubarak and his two sons, historians like Abdul Qadir Badayuni, and then the family of Shah Wali Ullah, and later Syed Ahmed Khan; and, in our own times, the scholars of Deoband, Abu' al-Kalam Azad and Allama Iqbal. Amongst all these there is only the solitary figure of Iqbal who as a philosopher can be considered as having influenced Western thought. The rest of them

remain unknown in Europe. We are afraid that the great monument of Western culture which has been raised on the foundation laid by the Muslims of the Middle East, the Indian Muslims did not contribute anything. There are none amongst them known like Averroes, or Avecinna, in Europe ! It will now be clear that the Indian Muslim was not a partner in this game. He is ,therefore, reluctant to accept from them anything today. There has grown a complex in the mind of the Indian Muslim on account of this, which is resulting in a most undesirable mental protest against everything that is Western. The period of slavery during the British rule in India may also have something to do with this. However, the main reason in our opinion is that as they had not contributed anything, therefore, they are hesitating to accept back anything. And in the end of our argument, let it be remembered, "The so-called Christian or Western culture is in no way a product of Christian genius, but of conflict between it and the free thought influenced by Islam." Of course, in adopting this culture, a distinction will have to be made, as to what is desirable and what is not desirable; what is useful and what is harmful. "Anything likely to improve, either material or moral conditions of man or society, is worthy to be accepted by Muslims, regardless of its origin."

(6)

Very early in Islam, almost by the end of the first century of our era, a great deal of spurious traditions had been

added to the meagre but authentic material which was available. This took a great deal of labour of our traditionists to get rid of. The efforts of Imam Bokhari are well known, and need not be repeated. But just to give an idea of his tremendous effort, the following facts may be cited. Out of hundreds of thousands of spurious traditions he selected only 7397 ! The number of these Sahih Ahadith can be further reduced if we take away the repetitions. This would then leave us with only 2761 ! And surprisingly enough, the opinion of the Great Imam regarding the authentic traditions is that their actual number is still much less. It is an admitted fact that, hardly two hundred sayings of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace !) are attributed to his four companions ! And if they were so cautious in adding to their number, we wonder if we can trust the traditions put forward by the other Sahaba ? It was therefore natural that unnecessary controversies should arise on their being expunged from the book of words.

Besides these spurious traditions, Christian and Jew converts to Islam also brought with them a great deal of their own traditions, which found their way into the Muslim beliefs. Some of these converts, it is on record, when they had attained knowledge of Muslim sciences, became great scholars themselves, and it was but natural again that their own ideas should find way into their writings, which innocent Muslims did not at first realise as having come from sources other than their own. Thus the simple and straightforward Muslim *Shari'ah* was clouded with Israeliat. The

generations that followed this period were "blind imitators" and "regarded those achievements of their predecessors as a sacred unchangeable legacy."

(7)

When Muslim scientists were contributing to the cultural advancement, the Muslim divines were labouring to create religious rifts, and sowed the seeds of discord that have ever since multiplied. If in Spain the Muslims experimented on flying machines, here in Iraq the 'Ulama were waging a furious war against the Mu'tazila. That was a life-saving experiment; this was a life-destroying achievement ! If in the Muslim laboratories of Damascus, the scientists invented the compass, here in Baghdad the 'Ulama created fresh problems of predestination. This problem of predestination has been so mischievously twisted that ever since then the Muslim world has not recovered from its rude shock, and is today one of the main causes of their backwardness. If Ibn Sina wrote the *Canon* to become the medical gospel of the Western world for centuries to come, here were the 'Ulama again airing the dead but complicating problem amongst the Muslim intelligentsia, of whether the Qur'an was created or uncreated ! Thousands of lives were lost over this. And does anyone understand the significance and utility of this problem today ? I can go on citing hundreds of such examples where the 'Ulama have been misleading the entire Muslim world. On the one hand the Muslim scientists were taking the existing culture ahead

by leaps and bounds, while on the other hand the 'Ulama were shouting their pet slogan of "Back to the days of the Caliphs" and destroyed the very spirit of the Muslim culture which was expanding towards progress. They do not for a moment realise how this could be possible. People used bows and arrows in those days, and travelled on foot and horses. Their system of communications was primitive and built up in horse posts. Will you discard the guns and grenades, and do away with motor cars and radios ? We wonder !

(8)

There is an extremely interesting saying of the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace !) and incidentally it is unanimously accepted as true; in which it is said that the Prophet one day happened to be passing near a garden of dates, where the owner was carrying on an experiment of grafting on one of the date palms. The Prophet stopped to enquire as to what he was doing. The man explained the whole process, and said that by doing so they get better fruit. Said the Prophet, "And supposing you did not do it." Having said this, he passed on, and the man thereafter stopped to repeat the experiment as was his wont every year, thinking that no less a person than the Prophet himself had suggested this; and therefore there must be some hidden secret in it. The fruit in the course of a couple of years deteriorated. Sometimes later, the Prophet again happened to pass that way, when the same man, seeing him, obstructed

his way, and addressed him thus : "You, sir, asked me to stop this grafting on the date palm trees some two years ago, when you were passing before my garden; and I taking your advice stopped doing it. And now the fruit has deteriorated." The Holy Prophet replied, "My dear man, anything that I tell you regarding your religion (*Din*), you must obey without question; but if I tell you anything of worldly affairs, you are the best judge, and you know the worldly problems better than I do." There is a lot of food for thought in this saying for people who are interested in an independent study of their worldly affairs. The Prophet here has clearly said that in matters of worldly affairs, you can act by independent reasoning and experience. Of course, the Prophet was correct. He knew that situations and scientific discoveries were going to come to light after him, and he could not give a verdict on them all. He could only and barely lay down the principles on which to work, and not give everyone the details of what he desired.

The Ulama have endeavoured to make the religion of Islam a specialised subject, thus securing for themselves its sole monopoly. They forget that its truth cannot be withheld from the common man. They have purposely and deliberately complicated this God-sent religion, just because they wanted the average Muslim to stoop to them for his knowledge. They did this first to entangle the rulers and then to entice the common man. At one time of the Muslim history the Fatwas became so cheap and frequent, that it became difficult to utter anything without the prior sanc-

tion of the Mullas. It is time this mystery of the religious monopoly of the Mullas was exploded, and the Muslims urged to seek their own guidance direct from the Qur'an and Hadith. The Qur'an needs a thoroughly deep and profound study, uninfluenced by the ideas of our professional 'Ulama.

(9)

It is surprising to see that the hundreds and thousands of the Quranic injunctions were reduced by the 'Ulama to the simple formula of the Five Pillars or *Fraiz* ! The rest of the Qur'an was made to hide in their shadow; as if it was something redundant and unwanted. Alas ! how has the Muslim world slept over this for such a long time, is difficult to understand. It is also difficult to forecast as to when it shall come round to make amends. It seems another nation will God bring into the fold of Islam who will have to teach us the true teachings of our dear faith. We will take these five pillars one by one and try to show how even their very meanings have been made obscure. Islam was not meant to be included and secluded in professional circles. It was meant for the common man who earned his livelihood by working in the fields, offices, workshops; who reared children, who fought for his country, and who tilled his land. Religion was to be combined with outdoor work. The 'Ulama, secluding themselves in their mosques to which were attached self-made Dar-ul-Ulum, where degrees were conferred *pro bono publico*, issued commandments to suit their

own programme. Let us take the simple question of *Tauhid*, the first pillar of Islam. "Say God is one : there is none like unto Him. He begets not nor is He begotten," is the simple Quranic formula, at once so subtle and convincing. It has a spontaneous appeal. And what do we see with regard to it ? That simple formula has been rendered into complicating theories of Unityism and Pantheism; *Wahdat-ul-Wujud* and *Wahdat-ul-Shuhud*, respectively. Its real implication has become obscure. More than one-eighth of Islamic literature deals with this subject today ! And how many of us do understand it ?

Now take the second pillar of *Salat* or prayers. The Qur'an lays more stress on ablutions, than on the actual postures of the prayers ! Why ? It is because the ablution and cleanliness is half the faith. Unfortunately, we see more Muslims ignorant of the methods of hygiene and sanitation than those that say their prayers regularly. Look at their foul figures and filthy apartments; walk through their stinking bazars and smelling cities. They are nothing but filth. It is interesting to note that the prayers are NOT an element of the faith. *Iman* (faith) is defined in the Qur'an as a belief in the prophets, the revealed books, the angels and the last day. And this is further corroborated by the well-known Hadith related by Ahmad, Abu Daood, Malik and Nasa'i :

"Said the Prophet of God : God says, the five daily prayers have been enjoined on you. Whosoever performs the abolutions thoroughly, and also performs the various postures, God has promised him great reward (or salvation). And those that do not obey this, God has made no promise with them. He may forgive them, or He may punish them."

It is quite clear from this Hadith that forgiveness can be obtained even without prayers; and therefore an act like the prayers is not a part of the faith. Otherwise the man who did not observe this pillar stood condemned at the altar of judgment. At the same time, it is imperative that in order to obtain salvation (*Najat*) one must be equipped with *Iman* or Faith. For those who are interested in this problem, we would draw their attention to the very illuminating discussion in the second volume of *Tarjuman-i-Sunnat*, page 94, written by Shaikh-ul-Hadith Maulana Badar-i-Alam of Meerut, who, in our opinion, is the only outstanding authority on Hadith in this subcontinent today.

Similarly a lot of loopholes can be pointed out in the interpretation of the other pillars of Islam. How complicated the 'Ulama have made the simple injunctions of the Holy Qur'an! Did the 'Ulama not find silly excuses to transfer their property at the time of the annual tax of Zakat in the names of their wives? The simple Muslim was paying his dues without any remonstrances, but the 'Ulama were finding ways of escape and teaching wrong interpretations of the injunctions to suit their own inclinations.

Today, relaxation and antipathy to work in days of fasting are being taught by them. Office working hours are being reduced and all work of exertion reduced to the minimum. Was fasting meant to toughen the Muslims or make them relax in their daily routine? These are facts which are even creeping in the government offices on the instigation of the 'Ulama. And probably the last pillar and

that of pilgrimage, is the only one which has been the least touched. Perhaps a microscopic minority of the faithful are able to fulfil this obligation every year and there is not much profit forthcoming. The following problems have been similarly complicated, and are now beyond the grasp of the average Muslim *viz.*, the problems of Khilafat, Imamat, Naskh, Mutashabehat, Miraj, Taqdir, etc., etc. It is almost difficult to get a true picture of these questions from the interpretations that have been put forward by our 'Ulama.

Indeed, it were the seeds sown in the first two decades of our era that we saw progress in the heydays of Islam. After this, discord and disruption had set in. Muslims of yonder days had progressed by performances while the Muslims after them have decayed due to vanity and wasteful thinking.

(10)

We are aware that we have already been treading on dangerous ground while writing this paper; yet, it is difficult to refrain from telling the truth. And as we have taken upon ourself to do so, we shall continue to disclose a few more facts, the enumeration of which is of utmost importance.

In Arabia, before the days of Islam, many customs and manners existed which passed on to the Muslims, and the Holy Prophet himself, during his lifetime, accepted quite

a number of them without any hesitation. They were not accepted indiscriminately. Only the useful were retained. It is not our intention today to suggest that we wish to recommend the Western tendencies of legalising prostitution and the use of wine. This would be against the dictates of our reason and against all laws of decency. But beside this evil side of the Western culture, there are innumerable useful aspects which cannot be discarded. It is the adoption of these useful items of culture that we wish to talk about; for wasn't it for this that *Asul-i-Fiqh* was introduced into our religion by the 'Ulama ? Surely, it was for finding amicable ground for adjustment between the old and the new requirements for the Mussalmans. They did feel a great need to harmonise and facilitate the working of the *Shari'ah*, in the new environment when the needs grew rapidly.

(II)

We now come to the question of how to reorientate ourselves in the newly created environment. The 'Ulama will perhaps say, "This is none of your business. Leave it to us to do the needful." How can we possibly do this after having seen what havoc they have wrought upon the Muslim world ? Have they helped to solve for us the present-day problems ? By converting religion into a specialised branch of knowledge, they have taken upon themselves the sole monopoly of religious interpretation, and orientate our lives as they visualise from their water tight compartments of self-made Dar-ul-Ulum !

After a study of Ibn Khaldun and Shah Wali Ullah, one becomes convinced that Islam has always received fresh impetus from the newly converted people that have come within the fold of Islam. This factor having been ignored by the Muslims, they have not correctly appreciated the shape of future things in store for them. Our revered teacher, the late Maulana Obeid Ullah Sindhi, used to impress this point with great force, and said that the history of the Muslim peoples has differed from the history of other nations in this one very notable manner.

It has been seen that in the history of Islam, only one people amongst them have at a time led the Muslim world in matters of intellect and science. The Muslim world which was comprised of various units, such as the Arabs, the Iranians, the Turks, the Berbers, and the Afghans, etc., only one out of them at a time lead in the promulgation of sciences, and added to the glories of Islam. A time came upon each of them, when having served to the best of their ability, the flame in them was extinguished, and they were replaced by others who had freshly come within the fold of Islam. And similarly, it can be seen today that the entire Muslim nation is incapable of progress. They have all served their time and their energies have dissipated. We shall elaborate upon this point a little further.

Islam arose in Arabia amongst the wild Beduins. They were a virile people. The simple straightforward teachings of Islam went down their hearts, and their lives were regu-

lated according to the dictates of the Qur'an. What did the Arabs do when the Holy Prophet was gone from amidst them? They had just conquered Iraq, Syria, and a little bit of Egypt, and spread the gospel into those countries. After this the pure Arab glory had come to an end. It were the newly conquered people who having accepted Islam further spread its gospel in the lands they now conquered. It were the Iranians that conquered India, and not the Arabs! It were the Berbers that went into Spain and not Iranians. Each time it was a new nation that was responsible for the renaissance of Islam. And when all of them had seen their heydays, and the force in them had been spent up, and no vitality was left in them, the Muslim world saw the biggest catastrophe it had ever yet come across. This was the onslaught of the Mongols. The whole Muslim world was in chaos, and their annihilation became imminent. The Mongols built castles of skulls in Baghdad. There was no one to raise a finger at them. The whole Muslim world was scared and cowed down to the mighty sword of the Il Khans. Bridges were built on the Tigris made from bricks of books drawn from the world famous library of the Nidhamiah. There was no one to stop this destruction of centuries old knowledge. What did the 'Ulama do? Instead of adjusting the lives of the Muslims in their new environments and making use of the *Asul-i-Fiqh*, they closed down the door of *Ijtehad*! They thus put a full stop to further progress of the Muslims. Let us see how the whole affair ended. Of course, the survival of Islam was a foregone decision; not that the 'Ulama helped it in any way. Islam

had come to stay, not by the mercy of the 'Ulama, but by the decree of the Almighty God. It could not be wiped out. Yet here was a nation lying completely helpless, perhaps awaiting a final kick to breath its last. But God Almighty all of a sudden infused a new spirit into them by bringing the descendents of Changiz within the fold of Islam. Never before such a miracle was seen in the history of nations; when the vanquisher became the vanquished. It was not the question of one or two Mongols accepting Islam; it was the whole nation of the Mongols that willingly, of their own accord, accepted Islam. This gave a new vigour to the Muslim world and its energies were invigorated. This conversion further saw the expansion of Islam, into lands hitherto unknown to the Muslims. It was Taimur, a descendent of Changiz, who knocked at the door of Moscow ! It were his forces that penetrated the steppes of Central Asia. It was Babar again his descendent, who finally established the Mughal Empire in India. We are now passing through similar times once again. Although spread over more than half the earth, and apparently possessing big kingdoms, we know in the heart of hearts our position in the international sphere. We possess all the evils today just as we did then. There is no moral or material difference between the Muslims of these two periods. Are the Mongols or some other nation going to come and join us again ? Or are we on the verge of being wiped out once more ? In the face of these facts does any of us hope to lead the Muslim world towards a Renaissance ? Can any one of them reconquer their lost domains or enter into new

lands ? We must ask this question frankly from ourselves, and realise our correct position in the world politics. Can any of us even lead the rest of the Muslim world towards progress ? I dare say the facts are too glaring to need any assertions. Our present generation throughout the world of Islam, with due respects to their intentions, is completely incapable and impotent to carry the battle of Islam any further. It is bankrupt intellectually, morally, economically, scientifically and physically. What is going to happen then ? Should we loose all heart of a revival ? Must we await our annihilation ? Do we need to girdle up our lions and observe the religious scruples diligently ? But we are already doing so, and our 'Ulama have organised themselves into various groups to stress this point. No, this is not the solution. The solution is this, and with it we come to the close of our thesis.

(12)

We must advance with the modern world, and carry the message of Islam into every nook and corner of the world, so that fresh and fertile minds grasp its message. They will understand the Qur'an better than we do. They will study it independently from translations made into their own language or, if fond of studying it in the original, they may learn Arabic, and get a firsthand knowledge of its contents. They will be saved the trouble of studying existing commentaries which are unnecessarily lengthy, and in which the meanings of the original text have been mutilated. The Christians and the Jews mutilated the original texts of their

scriptures; alas ! we have mutilated the meanings of the text. To us the difference is not very great. And when fresh stocks of people come within the fold of Islam, they will help us to regain our vigour. They will open new channels of action, and interpretation, being equipped with the latest knowledge of the West. Our preaching must be directed at the Western nations. We want people with advanced scientific ideas to come within our fold. If Islam is the true religion of God, and we most emphatically say it is : then it has come to stay and survive, and will not be wiped out. But it will yet be another nation who will wholesale come within our fold. This is not a day-dream, nor is it a wishfulfilment. It is a fact. Just wait and see. The trend of events in the course of Muslim history has ample evidence to support our contention. But we must carry the message of Islam into new realms of nations. There are nations today who have not yet had a taste of religion. There are nations today who have despaired of religion, and are frightened to go anywhere near it. Here are the fertile fields for our work. The message of Qur'an will invigorate them. It will set them thinking as to what an all-absorbing force this simple religion is. And how easily it meets with the daily requirements of our everyday life. Can we then trust the 'Ulama to carry on this onerous work ? They have to go into foreign lands to preach. Their greatest pride has been to be able to read and write Arabic. But are we going to preach in the Arab lands ? This would be carrying coal to New Castle !

No; we want people who can preach in the Russian

language. We want people who should be able to preach in Polish, Hungarian, German, Italian and English. Can we trust the 'Ulama to convey the message of Islam in those languages? We are afraid the answer is in the negative again. Not only this. We will want them to adopt the Western ways of life, to be able to live and preach amongst them. They must have a broader outlook on life, without which they cannot survive for a single day in those countries. They must impress upon those people that the Muslims of today are civilised; for, such is the conception of civilisation today. Who will then carry on this most vital duty for the survival of Islam? We will not attempt to answer this question, for the answer is so very obvious. It must not be construed from the above that we are trying to vilify the Arabic language, and are trying to belittle its spiritual values. No, not at all. We are fully conscious of its potentialities. Arabic, in our opinion, is the first language in which God spoke to his apostles, and it is the last language in which He spoke to the last of His Prophet. But the question still remains; you are not going to teach a Russian in Arabic. You don't do that in your own homes; how can you act otherwise outside?

We have tried to lay bare the multifarious activities of the 'Ulama, and the adverse effects their activities have had on the Muslim world. We have also clarified their position regarding the religious monopoly which they have bestowed upon themselves very graciously. It now remains for the nation to select a course for its survival. Surely we are not

going to be wiped out. We are here to survive and stay. Islam is the final religion of mankind. We have to strive and attain this end. There is no need to feel disheartened and embarassed.

Note:—Quotations in this article are from Kamil Y. Avdich's article "IS ISLAM ON THE CROSSROAD ?" published in the June 1952 issue of *The Islamic Literature*.

INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

(I)

THE writing of history has so far concerned itself with the interpretation of the past. We, today, are passing through an age in which events move quickly and unlike the past, the present seems to emerge into the future with imperceptible rapidity—at least more rapidly than it ever did in the days gone by.

The present today, can be seen projecting into the future more clearly than it ever did before. It is therefore, essential for us now, to re-orientate our outlook on the methods of writing history. We must aim at predicting the future course of events, rather than interpreting the past, as we have so far been accustomed to do. It is only history written in this manner that can answer the question as to what will be the attitude of a politically united Islam towards the non-Muslims and vice versa.

It is totally wrong, in my opinion, to think that because events are rapidly moving in the modern world, it is not possible to make a prediction. Or, as Professor Arnold J. Toynbee has recently said in Madras : "In different periods of history, there were different states of mind, and any calculation based on the past experience would be wrong. History could however present several if not

alternative paths for the future depending on the extent to which two different sets of events were parallel."

This is virtually accepting my thesis of history as predicting the future; for, to suggest paths, is to chalk out the future line of action based on the trends of historical events. My conception of predicting the future is not astronomical, as I shall explain later : it is based on the Quranic calculations of national worths and values. Nor can historical vision be obscured by rapidly moving events. On the contrary, the rapidly moving events brighten up the prospect of looking into the future in a more clear manner.

Our experience and knowledge of the decline and rise of empires and nations, and their mutual conflicts, give us considerable insight into the shape of future trends; especially after we have gathered sufficient information regarding the temperaments of the various nations, which are showing signs of revival, in a progressively ascending order.

We should therefore, be able to forecast their future line of action, not only for their own renaissance, but also as to how they would behave against each other; for, each one now knows how the other has behaved in the past. History now is more the history of passions, likes and dislikes, than it ever had been before. But we have to prevent it from becoming passionate; as it is said, the moment it becomes passionate it ceases to be history any more.

(2)

The introduction of nationalism in the history of na-

tions during the last century has created an impetus in the people to revive their old glory. The attitude of Islam towards nationalism and nationalist ideals is best expressed in the words of Iqbal, who says : "Nationalism in the sense of love of one's country and even readiness to die for its honour is a part of the Muslims' faith; it comes into conflict with Islam only when it begins to play the role of a political concept and claims to be a principle of human solidarity demanding that Islam should recede to the background of mere private opinion and cease to be a living force in the national life."

The present day political theories reinforced by vigorous press-agencies are controlling the developments within certain nations, moulding their historical processing in such a manner as was never done before. In spite of its vigorous effects, the days of theological interpretation of history have not yet gone. It still bears force and influences a great number of people. Revolutions are still ordained by God Almighty. It is at this point that we find the history of Islam branching off from the history of the rest of the world. And, whereas, the rest of the world still believes in a geographical, economic, and political interpretation of history, the Muslim world knows only one method of interpretation, and that is, a religious interpretation of history.

(3)

It is on this point alone, that the historians of Pakistan have to chalk out their programme for the writing of our

future history, and interpret it in the light of the present trends in the thought and actions of those who happen to be working to counteract our efforts of a revival. We have to forewarn our people of the political pitfalls or otherwise that await them in their struggle for survival in the arena of international conflicts.

We must take a leaf out of the life of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who correctly anticipated and calculated the definite character of the age which was coming. He not only warned the Mussalmans of India, but took adequate steps to equip them with the necessary education to fight the battle of freedom.

We the Muslims have dealt with a great many nations in the past, who have seen great days. The nations in the East and West declined after our rise. The nations that caused our decline, are on the decline today. The nations in the East that fell at our rise, are endeavouring to rise also. They are all conscious of our potentialities, and have combined to see that this revival of Islam is put back by whatever means they can manage to hold it back. All the energies of these people have been reserved to be spent in sowing discord amongst the Islamic countries. This is the common platform of their antagonism.

Hence all their foreign policies will be directed to this aim to achieve disunity in the Muslim world, and destroy its cohesion which is the recognised force in the spirit of Islam. The tactics employed by our opponents in the East

and the West, although apparently different in their character, are absolutely identical in their ultimate aim and purpose. While one of them strives to keep the balance of power against us, the other is working hard to undermine our material progress by the vilest modern political tactics of propaganda, and playing one Muslim country against the other.

And whereas, the manoeuvrings seem to be individual, they are all combined in their efforts. Such methods which the modern political warfare has evolved, is shaping the form of things to come, and one can conveniently forecast what line of action our people would take, and what plan the history of Islam has to adopt, in order to counteract the steps of the opponents.

After all, history is nothing but a record of the conflict between nations. It is in this manner that history can help to predict the future events and thus put the Islamic nations on the political map of the world which the conflicting ideologies of the world will ultimately produce. It is the more essential for us than anyone else to have a forecast of the future. And the historians of Pakistan are mainly concerned with this than anything else.

(4)

For a Muslim historian a belief in the Islamic scriptures is undeniable. In fact, in their content, the future is already amply predicted. International relations are described with-

out any reservations. The attitude adopted towards the non-Muslims is free and frank, and is based upon an established mentality of the various people, observed through ages of history. No history can claim to describe the character of the big nations so faithfully and accurately as the Holy Quran does. In fact, a faithful history was never recorded in respect of the great nations till the Revelations upon our Holy Prophet. (OWBP).

For the historians of Islam, there is no geographical interpretation of history; nor is there a racial, political, economic, or psychological interpretation. For a Muslim historian there is only one interpretation of history, and that is the theological or the religious interpretation.

History for a Muslim begins with the historical verses of the Holy Quran; which not only interpret the past, but forecast the future as well. Its forecasts depend upon foreign relations and moral values, which are applicable even today.

The causes of the decline and fall, and the rise of nations is given in great details. Is it not easy then, to build up the shape of things to come ? Is it not the job of the Pakistani historian to guide the nation while it is yet in the initial stages of its construction ? The Muslims are spread out over every clime of the earth; and although their temperaments and characters differ they have the same ideal before them; and that is the glorification of Islam. The Muslims believe in their revival wherever and whoever they may be.

We have to fight the forces that have come together, to fight against the revivalist efforts of the entire Islamic world. Is it then, not the job of the Pakistani historian to think out ways and means to brief their brethren regarding the trend of our future history ? It certainly is; and the sooner we get going the better for us. The efforts of our opponents have to be watched very carefully indeed, as the resources at their command are greater.

(5)

Mutual conflicts between the sister Muslim countries is a fact of history, which the world at large has watched since the last one thousand years. It is from history that our opponents learn how to bring them about. Such conflicts are not an unusual phenomenon in the history of a large nation such as ours, which is spread over a very large area of this earth, and comprising within its fold several racial groups. They are, in fact, present everywhere, but they are indeed regrettably more active amongst us than in any other nation. Our opponents therefore know fully well how to play one Muslim country against the other.

They have been doing it successfully so far. We have to combat this with all the force at our command. It is, in fact, the only drawback that seems will put off our revival today. To the superficial observer the present crises in the world of Islam may not appear to be the working of alien forces. We have to understand the under currents in order to forecast and counteract such disruptionist forces. We

have to calculate its effects, and forecast the duration of this setback to overcome it completely; at the same time to give our estimates and methods to counteract this most dangerous road block without clearing which, there is no hope of proceeding any further.

(6)

In our efforts of an Islamic revival the only retrogressive factor today is this road block. In our calculations we have to give the alternative paths of our approaches to the main problems facing us, and in doing this we are liable to make mistakes, but the history of nations gives ample illustrations where even mistakes have borne good fruit. Geographical, political and economic factors are not the determining factors; there is only one decisive factor for a Muslim historian, and that is the religion of Islam.

It may be true in the history of other nations that they saw their decline with the exhaustion of mineral resources at their disposal, but it certainly was never the cause of the decline of the Muslim empires. With us it was always the religious relaxation which brought about our downfall. But the religious resources of the Muslims are inexhaustible. They can still drink deep into it, if they may so please, and derive any amount of spiritual and moral reinforcement for their revival. No mineral or economic strength is required for them to come up again.

When they rose, they arose out of the sands of Arabia;

they shall rise out of it again. Can we then not predict our future? Can we not write our history accordingly to guide the oncoming tide?

(7)

I would like to draw attention of our historians here to the very important fact of the philosophical approach to the writing of history by Allama Ibn Khaldun. Why did he favour this approach at all? It is because, Allama Ibn Khaldun after great considerations and deliberations came to the conclusion that a philosophical interpretation was the nearest approach to a religious interpretation of history and which to his mind appeared the only feasible approach at that time. He wanted to infuse his interpretation of history with the philosophy of life, without which philosophy of history cannot be conceived. He has indeed stressed a great deal also upon the climatic and moral factors that tend to mould historical events, but he nowhere accepts them as decisive factors; or for the matter of that, as the determining principles in the course of historical event in the life history of any nation.

In the 20th century his biggest disciple is Prof. Arnold J. Toynbee, who has upheld his approach to the study of history; yet unfortunately, the professor will not accept that history can predict the future. Religion, therefore, has to be accepted as the only force in history. Nations without a religion have had no history worth the name. It is only the nations with a religion that will have a name

in the future history of the world. The rest of them that have had no religion will be wiped out from the surface of this earth. This is the Islamic interpretation of history.

Judging now from what has been said above, let us look at it from another angle, and see as to how best we can forecast the future, and in what manner we can help to guide our politicians to steer the course of future events. After all it is the politicians who eventually put into practice the formulated policies of the country. The historian merely directs his attention to his calculated forecasts. The politician must in some sense be a historian himself; for, he must see in the light of contemporary history and formulate his policies accordingly.

(8)

There is no denying the fact that today it is the foreign policy of a country that determines the political progress of a nation. For the Islamic countries their foreign policy is clearly laid down in the Holy Quran, and there can be no departure from it whatsoever. Any departure from it would be tantamount to hypocrisy. And to work out a proper foreign policy, we have to sort out the hypocrites amongst us—the class of people whom the Holy Quran has called Munafeqin. Without a proper sorting out of this element it is not possible to forecast the trend of future events; as the Munafeqin amongst us will sabotage our efforts of revival from within.

A Munafiq in the words of the Holy Quran is any

peason who talks openly of the might of the enemies of Islam in order to demoralise them, without the least regard of their limitations; and in our case today, without considering the progress we have made during the short span of our existence, which without doubt is unprecedented.

For the writing of our history giving details of future forecasts, it is essential to curb this element in the country with the greatest of speed and force.

To me every historical event is a lesson taught from the heavens, and as enacted in the drama of God Almighty's Will. The ultimate end of this drama is the enforcement and establishment of God's Kingdom on earth; and for us, Muslims, it is our belief and faith, that Islam will rule the minds of the people inhabiting this world; as, it is the natural religion of man. There will then be one "State of Mind", as professor Toynbee desires, and not different states of mind to miscalculate the predictions. We have therefore to strive to attain this end.

(9)

In the racial interpretation of history, a great deal has been said about the importance of blood and intellect in so far as leadership of nations is concerned. Let it be known that in the Islamic interpretation of history there is no such thing at all. It is faith and, faith alone that counts for leadership of nations; in particular the Islamic nation. Islam in the words of Iqbal, "finds the principle of human unification not in the blood and bones but in the mind of man."

The historians in the past have also dwelt at some length on the theory of race. Max Muller and Neitzshe have also written a good deal on this subject, but the fact remains that they were under an intellectual delusion. There is no such thing as race in history, and the history of Islam has amply proved that the various races that came under its way were each capable of forming colossal empires. There is only one race, and that is the race of mankind. The racial factor is not a decisive factor in the interpretation of history either; for, racial differences are created by differences in environment and geographical frontiers. Each race can be acclimatized to the environment of the other.

Mankind has not always settled in one place after all. It has drifted from valley to valley, and settled in strange lands under the duress of requirements, and has been adopting itself extremely well. Therefore, the element of race is an insignificant factor in the interpretation of history.

When I talk of forecasting the future events, I by no means mean the astronomical calculations of the Brahmins : I mean the Quranic calculations and evaluations of the history of nations. On this basis of a religious interpretation of history, the historians of Pakistan should be able to predict the future course of events and write our histories accordingly. And finally, in order to achieve this, a start has to be made with the writing of a religious and political history of Islam in the 19th century. This is a tremendous task, and has been long wanting.

This portion of our history must be written and completed within a minimum period, in order to enable us to build up the foundations of the 20th century history upon which will be raised the superstructure of future events, the signs of which are amply visible in the last 150 years.

I say the last 150 years, as our decline was at its height in the year 1799 A.D., when Tippu Sultan and the Turkish fleet at Navareno fell simultaneously, thus extinguishing the hopes of the Muslims for political revival. In the meantime we must guard our country from foreign ambitions and prevent its economic exploitation. We will then locate the seeds of our motherland, Pakistan, sown in the history of the last century. And we will then be able to sow the seeds for the coming crop of events.

(This paper was read at the 1957 Session of the Pakistan Historical Society held in Dacca)

MAN INHABITS THE PLANETS

Theory In The Light Of The Holy Quran

(1)

The last few years have occupied me with this problem; but my approach has been mainly religious, rather than scientific. The Holy Quran expounds positive knowledge; its thought is therefore, primarily scientific; and hence if I say, that my conclusions, (although experimentally unproven) are inspired by a scientific investigation, I am not far from being correct. I have laboured to prove conclusively from the Holy Quran, that it is not only our planet which is inhabited by Man and other living beings, but there are also other planets in our universe which are also inhabited by Rational Beings. My researches were published in the weekly **"Sidq"** of Daryabad last year, and in the weekly **"Nusrat"** of Lahore early this year. I had expressed myself in the Urdu language each time, which being a language unintelligible to universal research thought, remained inaccessible to the scientists of the West. Nor is our Press so alive as to give publicity to such news of importance, which if found by a journalist abroad would get due publicity and ovation.

(2)

On the suggestion of a few friends, I take this opportunity to put forward once again my views afresh in the

language intelligible to the scientists of the West, and also hope that it will trickle behind the Iron Curtain, to apprise Professors Vorontsov-Villyaminov and Vlasdimir Alpatov regarding an All Time Truth which was revealed fourteen hundred years ago. I hope the Western scientist will devote some time to ponder the truths in the Holy Quran.

Tass from Moscow flashed the news on February 21, regarding the assertions of the learned Professors from USSR. that Rational beings inhabited other planets. But this news merely repeated the oft-repeated declarations of uncertainty. The declarations are not categorical. They merely say, "there must be" and NOT, "there is" an infinite number of planets in the universe inhabited by beings endowed with reason. Several such assertions have assumed unnecessary proportions, but no one so far has said with confidence and certainty that life as such as it exists here on this earth, also exists in planets in the heavens. They have all maintained that conditions are not suitable for the sustenance of life in the planets. Some have even said that there is no trace of water, and hence life cannot possibly prosper in the planets, other than this earth upon which we live. Let it be made clear that the Holy Quran answered these questions in definite terms fourteen hundred years ago. It categorically says that life as it exists on this earth, also exists in the planets above, and water which is so very essential for life here is also found in other planets for the sustenance of life.

Says the Holy Quran:

"And among His signs

Is the Creation of

The heavenly bodies and the earth,

And the living creatures (DABAH).

That He has scattered through them

And He has power to gather them

Together when He wills."

(S. XLII. 29).

The Holy Quran further defines very clearly and unambiguously the word DABAH which means living beings, in the following words:

"And God has created

Every living being (DABAH) from water

Of them there are some

That creep on their bellies (Reptiles)

Some that walk on two legs (Mammals);

And some that walk on four (Quadrupeds)."

(S. XXVI. 45)

(3)

From the above quoted verses a few very significant aspects of this problem stand out, which are as follows:

1. **Samawat** stands for Heavenly bodies as opposed to the word **Sama** which merely means the heavens or universe.

2. God Almighty has spread living beings in the heavenly bodies; He has NOT suspended them in the void or heavens.

3. He has created these living beings from water.

4. Therefore, water is present in the heavenly bodies, because living beings are present there, and they have been created from it.

5. If water is present in the heavenly bodies, Oxygen and Hydrogen must of necessity be present there.

6. If Oxygen and Hydrogen are present in the heavenly bodies the atmosphere must be suitable for the sustenance of these living beings.

7. A complete picture of animal evolution is presented in these verses e.g. the Reptiles, the Quadrupeds and the Mammals, thus showing the various grades of these animals or living beings so that no confusion remains about the nature of their being.

8. God Almighty also says that He can get them together whenever He pleases.

I shall now return to argue about our premises further, and see how far the Holy Quran can guide the Western scientists in their research.

The Holy Quran is not a book of details; it merely gives you the fundamental knowledge to work on. As the Muslims have fallen on evil days, they cannot think of things in the light of the Holy Quran unless they themselves make some progress in modern scientific knowledge. The Holy Quran is a book of all times and for all people. Knowledge is not the monopoly of any one people; nor ever was it the monopoly of the Muslims. Each one builds on the foundations laid by its predecessor. Whosoever makes progress will find instructions and guidance for further progress.

People are today puzzled about the Russian Lunik and feel terrified at its landing on the Moon. Some Muslim divines I have had the occasion to talk to since, think this is fantastic; and no one will ever get to the moon, they say. This is the height of ignorance. The Almighty God says. "He has the power to gather them together when He wills". But, our Ulema are adamant that man will not succeed to join the other creatures in the heavenly bodies. This is the height of ignorance. Do not they realise that God Almighty has made the entire creation subservient to Man? And why should it surprise them that the USSR scientists will reach the moon, or for the matter of that, any other planet that they might conquer in the near future.

(4)

I am not ashamed of admitting today that it is the non-Muslim scientists who are making progress in knowledge. I am rather glad that it is the non-Muslims who have advanced in knowledge to prove and confirm the "Mutashabehat" of the Holy Quran and establish their truth (Muhkamat). Alas! there never was any fault with the Holy Quran; the fault lay with the Muslims themselves. It is a long time since the Muslims fell asleep; it is now time for them to wake up again, and see the work of those who took over the civilisation from them and what strides they have made in the short span of a few centuries in scientific progress. The Western scientists are working very hard to fulfil the prophecies of the Holy Quran. We lie dozing, intoxicated with a false vanity of a bygone pride of paltry achievements, which seems to pale into insignificance compared with modern scientific progress.

(5)

In order to further amplify these verses regarding the living beings on the planets, God Almighty further says in the Holy Quran:

"Whatever is in the heavenly bodies
And on the earth, doth declare,
The praises and Glory of God—
The Sovereign,
The Holy One, the Exalted In Might, the Wise".

(S. LXII: 1)

Listen to yet another clear verse which not only draws attention to the living beings in the heavenly bodies but also to the vast provisions and treasures for the material sustenance of such beings, Says God Almighty:

"To God belong

The treasures of the heavenly bodies

And the earth; but

The hypocrites understand not".

(S. LXIII. 7)

What are these treasures and who are they meant for? Surely it is man again who needs them. And who are the hypocrites in this verse—may I take the liberty to ask? Are they the non-Muslims or the Muslims themselves? Not only in this place, but in many other places also, if the Muslims were to ponder today, they would find the garment of Munafequin fitting well on their own person, rather than on any one else! This is unpalatable but true.